

Germany's
reunification
question

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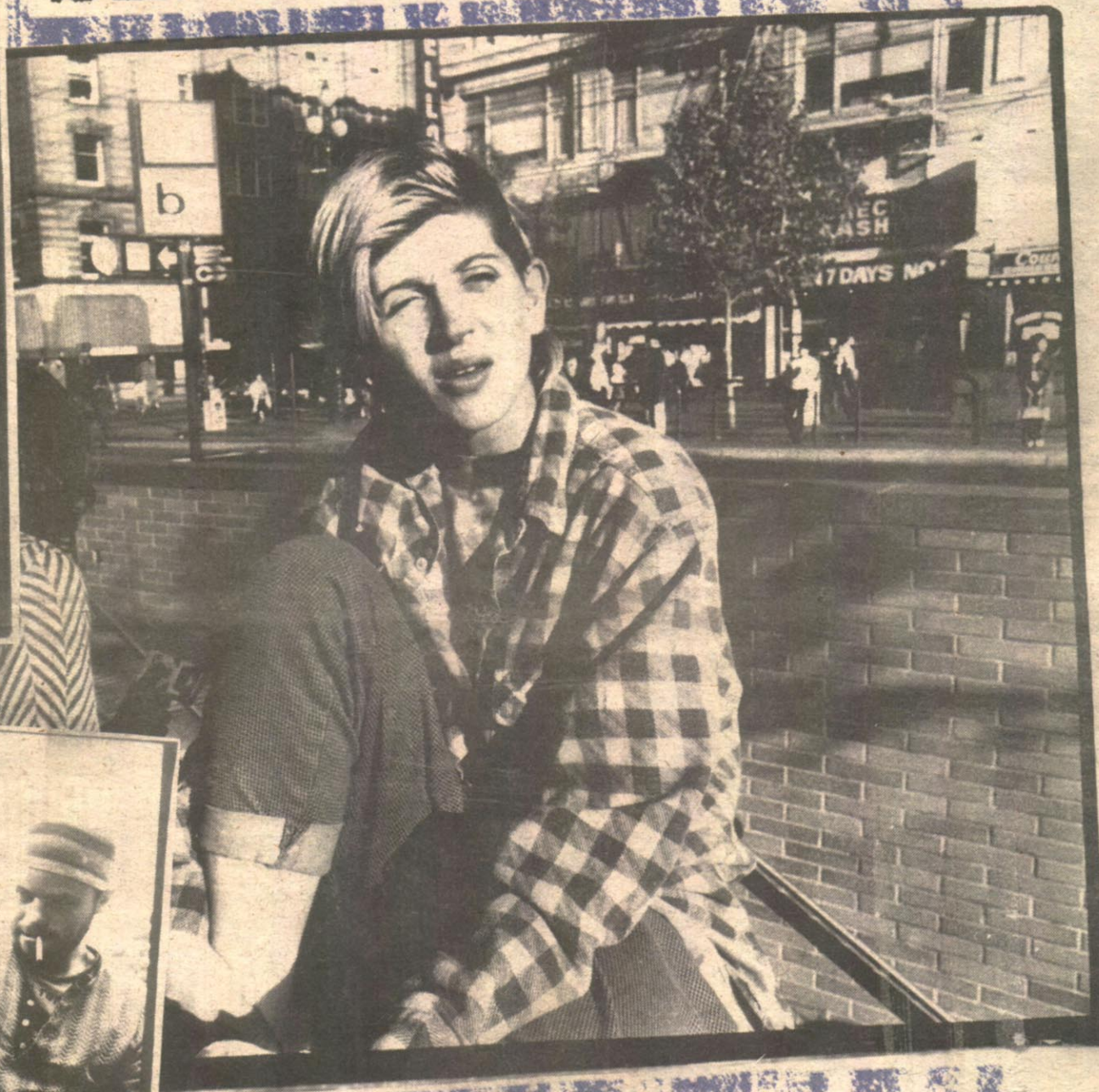
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kids on the street:
SEE HOW THEY RUN



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1989's events made Kissinger's realpolitik unrealistic.

Peaks and valleys of a turbulent year

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

In world politics, this year was the most eventful since 1968, the year of the May-June uprising in France, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the Mexican student movement, the Tet Offensive, the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy, the Columbia student strike, the demonstrations at the Democratic convention in Chicago and the election of Richard Nixon. But while the U.S. was one of the centers of international ferment in 1968, it has seemed part of a distant galaxy in 1989, untouched by the hot rays of protest and revolution.

No Tiananmen Square or Prague Fall here. There is great unease in the country about the nation's economic future, but few politicians or organizations speak directly to it. There is political ferment, but largely over drugs (seen entirely as an enforcement problem) and abortion, an issue that should have been resolved 30 years ago. The labor movement was more active and defiant in 1989 than in the past two decades but continues to lose when it matters most. Doug Wilder's victory in Virginia's governor's race

and David Dinkins' win in the New York mayoral election were important, but more as signs of welcome deferment than of substantive new directions.

George Bush has turned out to be a tower of mediocrity. He has sacrificed desperately needed social and economic expenditures to pursue entirely unnecessary increases in the military budget—even after a May intelligence report informed him of Soviet reductions in military spending. He has tried to dismantle industrial initiatives put in place by the Reagan administration. He has pursued the new right's social agenda, even after his pollsters discovered that the right no longer has clout outside a three-square-block radius of the Capitol. In Central America, Bush has proved a perfect foil for El Salvador's FMLN and Panama's Antonio Noreiga. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady's Third World debt plan will not work in Mexico and won't even be tried elsewhere.

Bush's Cabinet has mirrored his own mediocrity. When Secretary of State Jim Baker is not reading opinion polls, he is listening to former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. The dispatch of former Kissinger Associates executives Brent Scowcroft and Lawrence Eagleburger on a friendship visit in early December to the butchers of Beijing was pure Kissinger, except that with the elimination of the Soviet threat in Asia Kissinger's realpolitik no longer has a basis in reality.

After briefly sounding the tocsin for industrial policy, Secretary of Commerce Robert Mosbacher has turned his attention to his wife Georgette's social ambitions in Washington. U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills has begun to act like someone who used to make her living helping foreign companies undercut American companies. Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis Sullivan is a figurehead whose department is ruled by a coven of anti-condom new-right evangelicals. Drug czar William Bennett is a pompous fool who is trying to convince the hoi polloi that the drug crisis can be solved by getting Harvard sophomores not to smoke pot.

Bush and his lieutenants are totally oblivious to the nation's industrial decline. If the ski lifts are working properly at Sun Valley, Council of Economic Advisers Chair Michael Boskin is happy. Members of Congress, who must go home periodically, are less oblivious, but even they allow themselves to get swept up in the hysterias about drugs and flag burning. The best of the lot are House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt (D-MO) and Sens. Lloyd Bentsen (D-TX), John Heinz (R-PA) and Al Gore (D-TN).

Most of the think tanks also are useless. Brookings, the American Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation are too busy clamoring for Japanese and Korean money to worry about the American dollar. The exceptions are the liberal Economic Policy Institute, the very conservative U.S. Industrial Council and Rep. Mel Levine's (D-CA) Rebuild America.

The heartland needs to drop a political bomb on Washington. Short of that, here are some of the highlights and lowlights of the year:

Best Performance: Sen. John Danforth (R-MO), a sponsor of George Bush's ignominious flag-burning amendment, admitted that he had made a mistake on the eve of the final Senate vote last October. He said that he had realized that the amendment violated the Constitution. Once Danforth had jumped, fellow sponsors William Cohen (R-ME), Warren Rudman (R-NH) and Slade Gorton (R-WA) joined him, dooming the amendment's passage. **Honorable Mention: New York Mayor Ed Koch** ran a clean campaign for re-election, lost and then campaigned vigorously for Dinkins in the general election. Chicago's **Mayor Richard Daley** surprised black and left-wing critics by trying to heal the wounds of a divisive primary and general election.

Worst Performance: Rep. Ed Jenkins (D-GA) led the battle for a special two-year reduction in the capital-gains tax. His measure, which passed the House but failed in the Senate, had no justification except as a payoff to fat cats. **Honorable Mention: Sen. Alan Cranston (D-CA)** reimbursed savings-and-loan swindler and campaign contributor Ed Keating by stalling the investigation of Keating's Lincoln Savings and then tried to derail the savings-and-loan bill.

Sleaziest Performance: There are many, many deserving candidates this year, including Ronald Reagan for his

\$2 million performance in Tokyo, former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Samuel Pierce for his scintillating non-testimony, and Cranston and the other Savings and Loan Five, but the prize has to go to **Henry Kissinger**. As the fortunes of the demonstrators in Tiananmen Square waxed and waned, Kissinger hedged his bets, but once the demonstrators had been plowed under by tanks and their friends in the government ousted from power, Kissinger became the Chinese regime's foremost American apologist, arguing that Deng Xiaoping had to suppress the demonstration to prevent chaos. In his newspaper columns and TV appearances on the massacre, Kissinger failed to mention the financial stake he had in his own analysis. He used his Chinese government connections to secure favors from it for business clients, including American Express. Kissinger also has an interest in a \$75 million fund raised from American investors for joint ventures with the Chinese government.

Best Act of Political Revenge: In November, United Mine Workers (UMW) official **Jackie Stump** ran as an independent write-in candidate for the Virginia House of Delegates against longtime incumbent Democrat Donald McGlothlin Sr. and won by a two-to-one margin. McGlothlin is the father of Russell County Virginia Circuit Court Judge Donald McGlothlin Jr., who had earlier fined the UMW more than \$30 million for strike-related activities against the Pittston Coal Group. **Honorable Mention:** In El Cajon, Calif., Democrat **Lucy Killea**, who in the waning days of her campaign was publicly rebuked by San Diego Bishop Leo T. Maher for favoring abortion rights, upset an anti-abortion Republican in a December 6 state Senate race.

Irony of the year: During his November visit, Polish labor leader **Lech Walesa** pressured Secretary of Labor Elizabeth Dole to aid the Pittston strikers who, like the

INSIDE STORY

Eastern Airlines strikers, have had to face not only a hostile company but an anti-labor judiciary and government. As one labor official put it, the AFL-CIO's longstanding fight for free trade unions in Eastern Europe has paid off: they now have freer trade unions than the U.S. has.

Best Organization: NARAL, the National Abortion Rights Action League, can take considerable credit for both Rep. Jim Florio's landslide victory in New Jersey's gubernatorial race and Wilder's squeaker in Virginia. In addition, NARAL mobilized pro-choice voters in New Jersey statehouse races, unseating two pro-life Republican incumbents. "They put the fear of God into politicians about their position on abortion," one Washington consultant told me.

Best Book: Dutch journalist Karel Van Wolferen incurred the wrath of the Japanese government with his book *The Enigma of Japanese Power*. Van Wolferen argues that Japan cannot be understood as a liberal democracy but as a highly authoritarian society ruled by conclaves of competing and often corrupt interest groups. Van Wolferen's book shed astonishing light on the recurring political crisis that has wracked Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party. **Honorable Mention:** In *When the Machine Stopped*, Max Holland tells how a leveraged buyout helped wreck a once-promising machine tool company.

Best Articles: The *New York Times* has lifeless political coverage but now has better business reporting than the *Wall Street Journal*. Louis Uchitelle's articles on globalization were outstanding. In a March 29 article, Uchitelle produced this classic quote from NCR President Gilbert Williamson, "I was asked the other day about United States competitiveness, and I replied that I don't think about it at all. We at NCR think of ourselves as a globally competitive company that happens to be headquartered in the U.S." **Honorable Mention: James Fallows'** articles on Japan and trade in the *Atlantic Monthly*, and **Daniel Lazare's** article in *In These Times* comparing Prohibition and the current drug mania.

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By Alan Gilchrist & Louise Halper

IT NOW APPEARS THAT THE TREATY NEGOTIATED at the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) will be signed by partners, if not allies. At the recent Malta summit, President George Bush and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov directed their foreign secretaries to work out agreement on the remaining points of dispute in the arms-control treaty. Gorbachov said the summit marked a time when "the world leaves an epoch of Cold War and enters another epoch." Bush called it "a peaceful revolution."

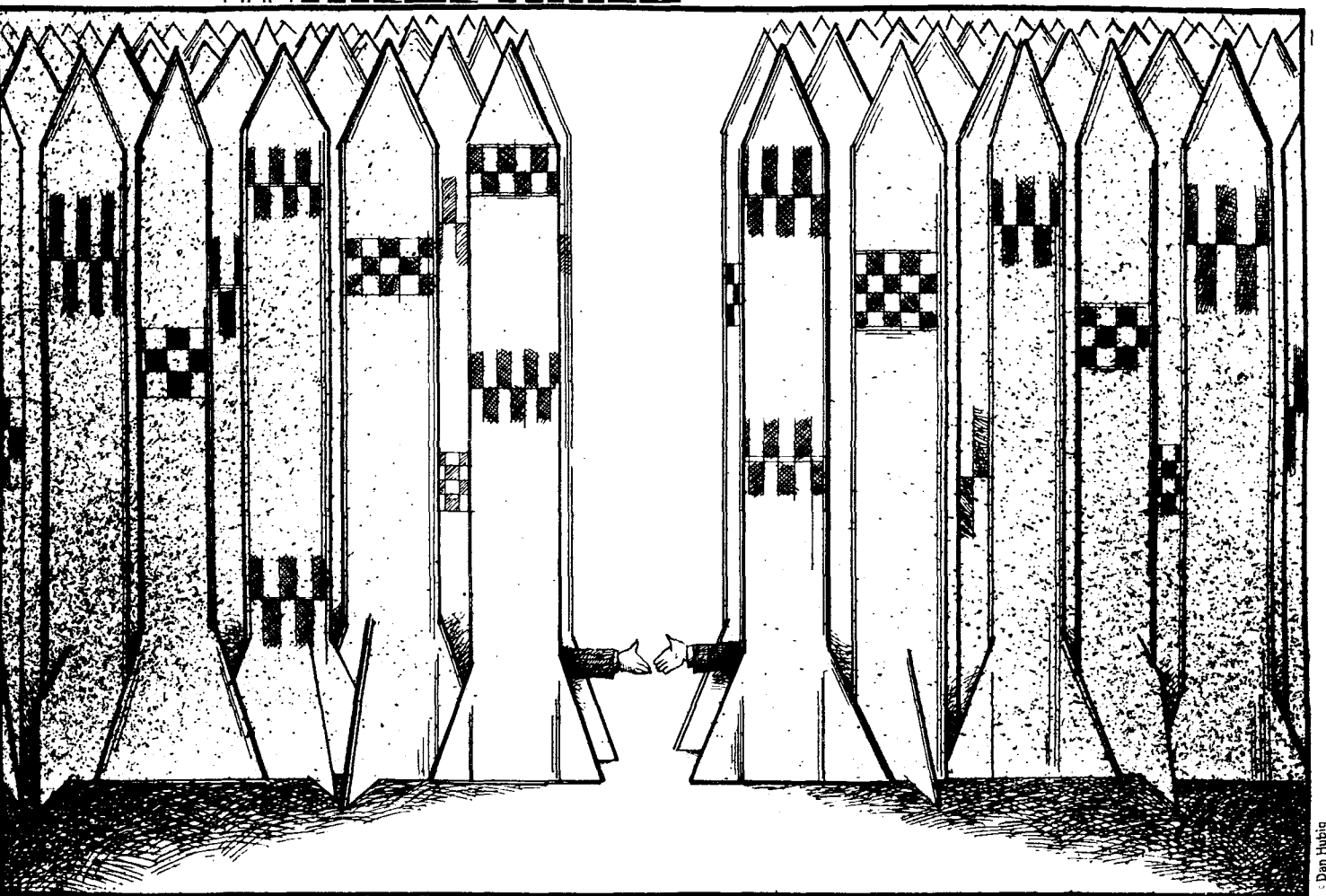
The START treaty the two will sign in 1990 was negotiated during the Cold War when the U.S. and Soviet Union sought only to lower the levels of their mutually opposed weaponry in the interests of stability, if not peace. It was born just after one of the Cold War's iciest episodes: when the Soviets had walked out of arms-control talks and the U.S. had deployed Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe. It was then that Gorbachov and former President Ronald Reagan began the five-year process that has led to the current detente.

The treaty hammered out under those circumstances bears the marks of its origins. It is the kind made by adversaries whose only common interest is to avoid the outbreak of war. Thus, START reduces the number of strategic weapons each side can mobilize while retaining for each the clear ability to respond forcefully and credibly to a first strike. Strategic weapons on each side are reduced from about 12,000 warheads on land, sea and air delivery systems to about 6,000 "countable" warheads. In fact, about 8,000 strategic warheads will probably remain. The exact number will depend on the ways the parties agree to tally their delivery systems.

STARTing over: Another part of the START negotiations includes a possible second round of cuts in strategic warheads to reduce them to about 3,000 for each side—enough to retaliate against all significant targets in the event of a first strike. Three thousand is the smallest number of warheads consistent with the strategic doctrine of deterrence as it has evolved since World War II. In the new post-postwar world, this second round of reductions—a START II treaty—is a far more realistic possibility than it appeared only one year ago.

The Reagan administration's objections to START in its first and second phases were more political than military. Its opponents never really believed that START reductions imperiled the U.S.' ability to retaliate against a first strike. To START critics, the inflated nuclear arsenal was more than a deterrent; it was a political tool—an important though imperfect control on Soviet behavior that countered the USSR's conventional-force advantage in Europe and pressured its economy toward reform.

START critics feared that the arms-control process could take on its own momentum and lead, given a popular desire for peace and reduced tensions, to demands for still more reductions. Although further cuts might be militarily acceptable, critics believed there was no real-world basis for the relaxation of political tension that such cuts would imply. As long as NATO and the Warsaw Pact were implacably opposed blocs,



Will thaw put START over political hump?

conservatives saw no basis for creating the detente that would be the political correlate of arms cuts. They were unwilling to dilute the political use of nuclear weapons, no matter what the deterrence doctrine might allow from the military point of view.

Now, however, the Gorbachov-driven upheaval in Eastern Europe, the Soviet retreat from Afghanistan and internal reforms in the USSR have led to a superpower accommodation that provides political support for the strategic-arms reductions envisaged in START. Beyond START, no one can say what the "new epoch" will demand in terms of strategic thinking and arms control, but there is no longer any mainstream, politically based objection to militarily acceptable cuts.

Unresolved issues: The outstanding START questions that must be resolved before Bush and Gorbachov meet again in June focus largely on cruise missiles. Sea-launched cruise missiles (SLCMs) remain a problem. In the September meeting between Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and U.S. Secretary of State Jim Baker at Jackson Hole, Wyo., the Soviets conceded that SLCMs need not be limited within START and asked that they be made part of a separate negotiation. But the U.S. has not agreed to negotiate on naval forces at all, and SLCMs may well remain uncontrolled.

Air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs) are also still an issue. These small, low-flying robot jets are launched from manned bombers capable of carrying up to 20 at a time. The parties have not agreed on the number of ALCMs that will be attributed to each bomber—the U.S. has proposed 10, the Soviets 20. This is clearly a resolvable dispute. It remains merely for the parties to pick a number between 10 and 20.

The only other substantive question is the ghost of Star Wars. The Bush administration, while not renouncing the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), has allowed Congress to cut the project's funding. But although the administration has no priority plans for SDI, it is unwilling to forsake the possibility of a scientific breakthrough on such weapons. Thus the U.S. will continue research on space defenses and will not assure a definite period of adherence to the narrow, or traditional, interpretation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty barring certain kinds of testing and deployment of space-based weapons.

In September, in perhaps the biggest concession since the Reykjavik summit foundered upon Reagan's refusal to acknowledge a link between Star Wars and START, the Soviets agreed to require no commitment to non-withdrawal from ABM as part of the

The citizens of both countries must decide whether the benefits of arms cuts outweigh the disadvantages of possible cheating at the margins, and must trust their leaders to reach agreements that enhance their security even if they are not completely verifiable.

START treaty. Instead, they plan to issue a unilateral statement at the time of the initialing, or perhaps the formal signing, of START, saying they will consider U.S. withdrawal from the ABM Treaty grounds for abrogating the START treaty under the clause that allows either party to withdraw if its "supreme national interests" are threatened by adherence. The U.S. has said it "will not accept" such a unilateral statement but is obviously unable to prevent it except by refusing to sign START.

Faith and hope: Verification questions are, at this stage, largely political. Arms-control opponents know that verification can never be 100 percent certain within the context of deterrence. Perfect verification can be destabilizing because the information either side needs to verify the other side's weapons is the same information it needs to target them. Thus, verification objections can be raised against almost any weapons-control treaty.

These objections require a political answer. The citizens of both countries must decide whether the benefits of arms cuts outweigh the disadvantages of possible cheating at the margins. They must understand that no verification regime is foolproof and stable and must trust their leaders—as the American people trusted Reagan in the Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty negotiations—to reach agreements that enhance their security, even if they are not completely verifiable. Such a popular consensus, if it forms, would be reflected in the Senate, which must consent to any treaty by a two-thirds majority. Paradoxically, the recent Soviet concession that their Krasnoyarsk radar violated the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty probably made it easier for the Senate to accept that the Soviet Union under Gorbachov can be relied upon to adhere to arms-control agreements.

In this new post-postwar epoch of superpower partnership, public opinion, and thus the Senate, is likely to reach a consensus in favor of START.

Alan Gilchrist and Louise Halper write regularly on arms-control issues for *In These Times*.

By Joel Bleifuss

Congress given drug test

Rep. Pete Stark, a San Francisco Bay Democrat, has asked his fellow Congress members to take a drug test. *S.F. Weekly's* Art Silverman explains, "They don't have to pee in a bottle, just answer a few multiple-choice questions." Stark, one of the few Congress members to expose the folly of Bush's war on drugs, gave his colleagues 20 questions to answer, including the following four:

1. Who said, "If you want to lose the war on drugs, leave it just to law enforcement"? (a) Attorney General Richard Thornburgh, (b) Willie Horton, (c) Timothy Leary, or (d) Drug kingpin Carlos Lehder.
2. Under a \$2.9 million federal drug-fighting grant, members of the Texas National Guard will: (a) Dress up as cactus plants at night along the Mexican border, (b) Invade Colombia to destroy cocaine-manufacturing plants, (c) Patrol the Gulf of Mexico, or (d) Teach English to peasant farmers in Bolivia.

17. Most drugs coming across the Mexican border are brought in by auto or on foot. Nonetheless, the U.S. Customs Service has spent more than \$25 million in the last two years to manufacture and fly sophisticated radar balloons off the Mexican border. How many smugglers has this operation netted?

19. One-fourth of this group favors some form of decriminalizing marijuana: (a) The Moral Majority, (b) The Bloods and the Crips, (c) Colombian drug lords, or (d) The nation's top chief prosecutors.

Answers: (p)61 (2)11 (a)2 (e)1

A chip off the old auction block

Abandon your stereotype of the computer industry as an enclave for binomial nerds. According to *Infoworld*, a microcomputer magazine, fewer companies than in previous years used sparsely clad women to entice customers into their booths at Comdex, an annual computer trade show. One exception was the Japanese firm Fujitsu. Alice LaPlante reports, "With an Arabian Nights theme, more than 1,000 Fujitsu guests were treated to a lavish spread of food and drink as well as live entertainment that included magicians, sword swallows and belly dancers. Some members of the audience were astonished by the spectacle of a turban-clad Fujitsu senior executive being carried around on a golden throne by male minions as his 'favorite' women danced suggestively in front of him, but that was minor compared to what happened next. A 'harem' of chained 'slave girls' was brought in front of the crowd and 'auctioned off' to the crowd. A horrified Fujitsu manager watching from offstage stopped the auction, but not before two girls were 'sold' and carried away kicking over the shoulders of male attendants."

Ideological war

As we enter the last decade of this millennium one Communist government after another has crumbled in Eastern Europe. Former Cold Warriors proclaim victory—the democratic marketplace has won, Communist big government has lost. But the split between East and West has not ended, it has just been redefined and expanded into a post-*glasnost* division between the wealthy democracies and the rest of the world—a world that has some lessons to learn, some goals to aspire to. Those lessons and goals, as they are presented on the nightly news and on the nation's editorial pages, involve not just free elections but sound economic management. Ideology has nothing more to teach us; it is a question of technique. And those techniques are best taught by the denizens of free enterprise—world banking organizations, multinational corporations and that free-world leader, Uncle Sam. It's time to say "no" to such hogwash. Commenting on the Malta summit, Alexander Cockburn writes in *The Nation*, "As they tossed up and down on the billows of the wine-dark sea, Gorbachov told Bush that 'ideological struggle' should be a thing of the past. So we'll just have to carry on without him."

Survival of the richest

One business skill the world's poor can learn from corporate America is how to compete. Goodyear executive Stanley Mihelick, for example, could teach an international seminar on the subject. He said recently, "Until we get real wages down much closer to those of the Brazils and the South Koreans, we cannot pass along productivity gains to wages and still be competitive."



Gulag for drug users: 'You are now the property of...'

"The idea of Special Alternative Incarceration [SAI] is catching the attention of government, criminal-justice administrators and the public," says Robert Brown Jr., director of the Michigan Department of Corrections. And well it should. The "shock incarceration" program that Brown's office oversees foreshadows a dangerous trend.

In 18 states, non-violent, first-time drug offenders are being sent to military-style boot camps as an alternative to prison. According to drug czar William Bennett, petty drug dealers and casual users are incarcerated in these centers to keep them from learning the "tricks of the trade" from hardened criminals. But a video tour of a pilot program judged a success in Michigan shows that young offenders are sent to these camps to break their will through psychological abuse and torturous work detail.

Corrections officers, acting as drill sergeants, condition the inmates to give up their identities and become submissive. Inmates sleep in military-like barracks. The officers wear military-style uniforms with eight-inch American flags patched over

their triceps. Essentially, Michigan's SAI facility is a labor camp where the corrections department tries to "strip away the layers" of the "street-oriented attitude" that these youth developed to survive in hostile, usually inner-city environments.

"You are now the property of the SAI program," a corrections officer shouts into the back of one inmate's head. "Do exactly what you're told, and do it as fast as you can. If you don't make it here, the rest of your life you'll be nothing. You'll be trash the rest of your life." The narrator of the film explains that this treatment helps the inmates develop self-esteem.

The narrator says SAI seeks to eliminate the personality of the "street-smart wise guy," leaving a clean slate "where self-esteem, the work ethic and self-respect" can make a lasting impression. How calling the inmates "maggots" leads them to self-esteem is not explained. Instead, the video narrator points out that former "young street punks nervously check each detail of their bunk and foot locker" during their 10 to 30 minutes of free time each day.

Motivation usually comes in the form of public ridicule, as those who cannot adapt to the rigor of the physical tasks are fitted with orange wrist

bands that brand them as weaklings. Those unwilling to submit to this humiliation are handed Bibles and relegated to beds marked "Quitter" located in common areas of the prison. Those who refuse to conform are deemed "unready for personal growth and sent to the state penitentiary."

The corrections officers instill the work ethic in the inmates through forced labor. Clearing wooded areas for roadways follows morning exercises and precedes evening calisthenics. Other motivational activities include breaking rocks, digging ditches and serving as prison janitors. Between tasks, inmates feed in robotic precision.

In the best traditions of rehabilitative incarceration, inmates attend educational-development classes each week, where they learn to write resumes and to succeed at job interviews.

These camps provide the states an alternative to expensive prison construction programs. Seventeen other states are considering building them. And a presidential commission is deciding whether to use vacant military bases for homeless shelters, drug-treatment facilities or prison boot camps like the one described above.

—Matthew Reiss

Bush administration has its spies on CISPES

When both CIA Director William Webster and FBI Director William Sessions conceded that the FBI should not have harassed the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) during Webster's misbegotten tenure as FBI director, it might have seemed that the violations would end.

But according to a document acquired by CISPES during the prosecution of an anti-war activist in San Francisco, government spying on CISPES and other opponents of the U.S.' Central American policy has continued.

The document, a March 6, 1989, domestic intelligence update, originated at the State Department—specifically at the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS). The report's author, Charles Sparks, is identified as a member of the Diplomatic Security/Policy/Threat Assessment Division.

Sparks sent the update to 12 people in DS, including nine stationed in major U.S. cities who have the ominous title "Bureau of Diplomatic Security field office special agent in charge." In his report on the activities of CISPES and the Salvadoran Refugee Committee (CRECEN),

Sparks wrote that both groups had planned a "non-violent blockade" of the State Department to protest what he acknowledged as the "U.S. war in El Salvador." He also noted that CISPES had been planning "a fundraising dinner on March 11, 1989."

CISPES and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) are particularly upset about the last line of the intelligence document, which reads, "This information should be shared with appropriate law-enforcement contacts as well as official government of El Salvador representatives."

FMLN spokeswoman Guadalupe Gonzalez put it this way: "It is very dangerous for the Salvadoran government to be getting the names of Salvadoran refugees who are opposing the government from here in the U.S., because under the newly passed anti-terrorist law, speaking against the government is prohibited whether you are inside or outside the country. If you do it, it can mean a 10-year prison sentence." In El Salvador, a prison sentence for people convicted of political crimes is often a prelude to death.

CISPES spokesman Mike Zielinski says, "This memo indicates that the government's harassment and surveillance of CISPES is ongoing. [FBI Director] Sessions has testified in Congress that the FBI's actions in spying on CISPES were an aberration

and had ended in 1985, but here we have a government agency continuing that kind of activity in the spring of 1989."

Jinsoo Kim, who has been working on the CISPES spying case for the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR) says, "When Americans go to El Salvador, they often find their names on a list when they are stopped at the airport in El Salvador. That list had to be coming from somewhere, and now we have an idea where the source is."

CISPES and CRECEN activists worry that the State Department's newly uncovered intelligence work may in part explain the violence and threats of violence against those in the U.S. working against American policy in Central America.

Noting that alleged termination of FBI surveillance and infiltration of CISPES by the FBI has not put an end to death threats received by activists, CISPES' Zielinski says, "There is still quite a pattern to the harassment, and I think it is clearly being organized as a way of stifling dissent." He notes that recently Salvadoran refugees in Los Angeles were presented with a "hit list." And last week, a Louisville, Ky., minister active in CISPES was sent a photograph of the six priests killed in El Salvador accompanied by a note warning, "You're next."

—Dave Lindorff

U.S. ambassador tries to discredit Salvadoran witness in Jesuit murders

SAN SALVADOR—The head of the Salvadoran Catholic Church here strongly criticized U.S. Embassy officials last week for attempting to discredit a key witness that linked the Salvadoran military to the November 16 killing of six Jesuit priests, their cook and her daughter.

The U.S. Embassy had arranged for the witness, Lucia Barrera de Cerna, to be brought to Miami on Thanksgiving for "protection." But Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas declared in his December 10 homily that "instead of being protected as promised by the personnel of the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador, she was submitted to brainwashing and the blackmail that she would be deported if she didn't tell the 'truth.'"

"After this psychological torment, she vacillated and retracted what she had declared in El Salvador. Fortunately, free of the pressure of her 'protectors,' she has returned to the truth."

U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador William Walker reacted angrily to the archbishop's charges, reminding reporters of the Catholic Church's own aggressive questioning during the Inquisition. Later, in a formal statement Walker said, "I am saddened that the archbishop doesn't believe that the U.S. government and he are on the same quest for truth.

From the moment this outrage [the killing of the priests] occurred, there have been a great many misinformed and unsubstantiated statements offered by persons in positions of authority. The version that was provided to the archbishop is incorrect."

Before she was relocated outside the country, Cerna testified that she was awakened the night of the murders by the sound of gunfire. According to the judicial records, she went to a window, where she heard the voice of Father Ignacio Martin Baro, the vice-rector of the university, who cried out, "This is an injustice, you are cowards." Soon after there was machine-gun fire—and then silence. Cerna said she saw five men in military uniform near the residence of the Jesuits, and although the electricity to the area had been cut, she could see two of them clearly because of the full moon.

On December 9, both the Salvadoran government and the U.S. Embassy made what appears to have been a coordinated attack on Cerna's credibility. President Alfredo Cristiani of the rightist ARENA Party declared in a press conference before leaving for the Central American presidents' summit in Costa Rica that Cerna's testimony was false. Later in the day, Walker gave journalists a background briefing, saying that Cerna had been discredited. He insinuated that either the Catholic Church's human-rights official, Maria Julia Hernandez, or Jesuit priests were responsible for helping Cerna fabricate her story. He said that she had failed six polygraph

tests during a three-day period and had changed her story several times. Walker said that in the end Cerna had admitted that she hadn't actually seen any soldiers.

But the lawyer who interviewed Cerna after her interrogation by the U.S. officials called that interrogation "coercive." Scott Greathead, the assistant attorney general of the state of New York and a founder of the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, was asked by U.S. Jesuits to interview Cerna to determine the credibility of her testimony.

"I find her testimony to be credible," said Greathead, who interviewed Cerna over a three-day period.

"It is clear to me that this was an effort to get her to recant what she had said in El Salvador," he continued. After four days, "she couldn't stand it anymore and told them what they wanted to hear—that she hadn't seen anything that night."

In early December the president of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, Paul Tipton, criticized Walker in a letter to the U.S. secretary of state. The letter read, "Ambassador Walker's apparent participation in efforts to discredit the testimony ... is a shocking betrayal of the responsibilities of our official representative in El Salvador" and "raises serious questions regarding the commitment of this administration to the objective of a fair, thorough and impartial investigation of the murders."

—Chris Norton

She's yours

The private sector can't do it all by itself. That's why there are government programs like Ronald Reagan's Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). Fusades, a Miami-based, non-profit foundation that promotes investment in El Salvador, extols the virtues of the CBI. The group recently took out a full page ad in *Bobbin*, a garment-industry rag, that depicts an attractive Salvadoran seamstress named Rosa Martinez busy at work. The ad reads, "A great value at 57 cents an hour! Rosa Martinez produces apparel for U.S. markets on her sewing machine in El Salvador. You can hire her for 57 cents an hour. Rosa is more than just colorful. She and her co-workers are known for their industriousness, reliability and quick learning. They make El Salvador one of the best buys in the CBI ... and there are no quotas."

Export that dream

If CBI fails, there are always corporate charity and foundations like Accion International, which makes small-business loans to Latin American entrepreneurs. From all accounts, the Cambridge, Mass.-based group is successful in its support of what associate director Stephen H. Gross terms "the poorest of the economically active." Sure beats Caribbean Basin imperialism. Gross recently traveled to St. Louis to drum up corporate contributions from the likes of Monsanto, Anheuser-Busch and Ralston Purina. When the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch's* Susan Thomson asked Gross why these corporations should help fund Accion, Gross replied, "It's enlightened self-interest on the corporations' part [because] we're defusing tremendous social unrest by giving people hope and potentially increasing the buying power of millions of people."

Automatic self-destruct

The inability of the First World victors to serve as a role model for responsible government is examined from an environmental angle by Christopher Stone in his recent book, *Earth and Other Ethics: A Case for Moral Pluralism*. Stone writes, "There is today a widespread feeling that our technology, our capacity to alter the Earth, and the relations thereon, is outstripping our ethics, our ability to provide satisfactory answers to how that power ought to be exercised. And there is the further feeling that even when we know, or believe we know, what would be the right thing to do, our social institutions, the bureaucratic machinery of the courts and agencies, are incapable of bringing it about."

Pentagon shell game

Officially the U.S. government has only 55 officers in El Salvador advising the Salvadoran army on how to suppress a popular revolt. So what was the mission of the 12 members of the Army Special Forces whose stay at the Hotel El Salvador was interrupted last month by an FMLN occupation? As John Hess of the *New York Observer* put it: "How come our tough Green Berets lodge in the VIP wing of a luxury hotel in San Salvador, and how come the rebels located them before our media did? Does anybody believe that the White House is obeying legal limits on military involvement down there?" Good question. David Lindorff called the Pentagon and asked them what the 12 were doing in El Salvador. Army spokeswoman Maj. Kathy Woods told him the Green Berets were not among the 55 official U.S. advisers, contradicting the report by the *New York Times's* Lindsey Grusen on the rebel occupation. Rather, they were in El Salvador on a "training program." She explained, "We have a lot of different training programs down there—medical, road-building. As you know they have a lot of needs down there." When asked if it was unusual to hold training exercises in a war zone, Woods said, "We try to avoid putting them in hot spots. But where in the world are you not likely to get shot at these days?" As for why the 12 soldiers were armed to the teeth, Woods replied, "I really don't know what training program they were down there for."

Happy 1990

And now some more gloom. The World Future Society predicts: "The '90s will likely be the most worry-filled decade that mankind has ever experienced." And as you fret, you can count on us at *In These Times* to keep you posted on the latest worry.

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By Salim Muwakkil

MOST CONTEMPORARY ANALYSES OF THE problems plaguing the African-American community have become increasingly focused on the plight of black males. But while black males bear much of the brunt of many social dislocations, black females face equally daunting, though apparently less "news-worthy," obstacles.

Living in a culture that still devalues their gender, race and class, African-American women are compound victims. Almost one-half of all African-American households are headed by women. The median income of these female heads of households was \$7,425 in 1980, according to Urban League figures, and is estimated to be only slightly higher in real terms today. African-American females are the leading players in the so-called "feminization of poverty."

Two-thirds of the estimated 4 million homeless in the country are families, and 40 percent of those families are African-American. In some large urban centers, the number of black homeless is closer to 70 percent of the total, and black families—that is, black women with children—make up the bulk of that population.

African-American females also are inordinately represented among victims of domestic violence and abuse. Increasing numbers are falling victim to criminal lifestyles. In fact, there are more black women currently incarcerated than ever before in U.S. history. Clearly, the black community's afflictions span the genders.

Still, black women are making substantial progress in many realms. For example, they attend colleges and universities at near-record levels. Meanwhile, the number of their male counterparts entering college has dropped precipitously in recent years. Black women are easily absorbed into the expanding—though still relatively low-paying—service sector of the U.S. economy, when they are able to enter the marketplace.

A widening range of college-educated females are assuming unprecedented positions of leadership within the black community as well as the community at large. And although they remain somewhat hampered by the obstacles of racism, black female professionals are making unprecedented gains.

"I found that the bank I worked for was gung-ho about my advancement only up to a certain point," says Emma Mitchell, a self-employed economist, "and at that point I knew it was time to get out." The Chicago-based Mitchell has found considerable success in forming her own business, and a surprising number of black female entrepreneurs share Mitchell's story.

Unhappy success: But for many of these black women, their unprecedented triumphs have a bittersweet quality. "The pool of eligible black men for black women gets smaller and smaller the further they go up the educational and career ladder," explains Joyce Ladner, a sociology professor at Washington, D.C.'s Howard University who has done extensive research on African-American women. In recent years the social gap has widened considerably as the educational distance between black men and women has increased. The American Council on Education's 1989 report charting the decline in the number of black male undergraduates has sparked a series of warnings about the

Men not the only victims of problems vexing blacks



study's dire social ramifications.

Many social analysts warn that the declining number of black men on college campuses will leave black women as a group not

RACE AND SEX

only better educated, but with higher incomes and more prestigious jobs and, probably, a greater share of leadership. This, they insist, will not be a good thing.

William Julius Wilson, professor of sociology and public policy at the University of Chicago and the author of several studies on the African-American community, says the growing imbalance is likely to increase

Living in a culture that still devalues their gender, race and class, African-American women are compound victims, and the leading players in the so-called "feminization of poverty."

"the social distance and hostility between men and women," harming "social integration within the black community as a whole."

This social distance is aggravated by the accelerating deterioration in the plight of the black male. The statistics are grim but apparently are becoming well-known to many Americans. For instance, it has recently become common knowledge that homicide is the leading cause of death for black men. But this wider acknowledgement of the problem seems to have done little to inspire the consideration of serious solutions.

Narrowing the gap: Black women's organizations are among the few groups seeking such solutions. For example, conferees at the recently concluded Black Women's Political Action Forum held in Washington, D.C., were surprised to find the problems of the black male as an agenda item for the first time in the group's history. The forum is a joint undertaking of four of the most prominent sororities among African-Americans—Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Sigma Gamma Rho and Zeta Phi Beta—and has historically limited its range of concerns to matters related mostly to college-trained black females.

"Our board decided to take some action on the deep crisis that has trapped our black men," explains Alonda Cannady, the eastern regional representative for Delta Sigma Theta and an organizer of the conference.

"It's becoming clearer and clearer that all of us, male as well as female, have to rise if we as a people are going to make progress," Cannady says. "We simply can't do it one gender at a time." Since many of the black community's high achievers are sprinkled liberally throughout these four service-oriented sororities, their views illustrate a growing determination among nominal haves to reach back for the have-nots.

The November 1989 issue of *Essence*, "the magazine for today's black women," features an indigo-hued photograph of a brooding black man on the cover to illustrate a series of articles on his brethren's increasingly desperate plight. "Our men, in love, in trouble," the headline laments. Even the high-level tensions that once charged much of the discourse between feminist-inspired black women and black nationalist-inspired men seem to be abating somewhat as the consensus grows about the nature of the problem.

No jobs: In *Women and Children Last: The Plight of Poor Women in Affluent America*, sociologist Ruth Sidel concludes that unemployment among black males is the primary reason for the skyrocketing growth in families headed by black women. Black male unemployment, Sidel writes, is "astronomical," adding that such a "shockingly high rate of male unemployment has had a direct bearing on the dramatic rise in black female-headed families."

The University of Chicago's Wilson has also done research on what he terms a "male marriageable pool index" (MMPI). Wilson has found that young, inner-city black women—like their older college-educated counterparts—are confronting a shrinking pool of economically stable, or "marriageable," men. His findings correlate a low MMPI directly to the rise in black female-headed families.

In a special issue devoted to issues of race, class and gender discrimination in the U.S., *The Nation* in July published a series of articles guest-edited by Jewell Handy Gresham and Margaret B. Wilkerson, two well-known black feminist scholars and teachers. The issue focused on many issues of concern among black women: the politics of family, the enduring nature of racial stereotypes, the vexing dilemma of public education, etc. But the concern that attracted the clearest focus was the problem of black males. "The term 'feminization of poverty,' which was devised to describe the significant numbers of women and children living in poverty, is a distortion that negates the role played by racial barriers to black employment, particularly among males," Wilkerson and Gresham write in the opening essay. "The feminization of poverty is real, but the racialization of poverty is at its heart. To discuss one without the other is to play a mirror game with reality."

Black women with children are among the poorest segments of this society, but, according to a study by the *New England Economic Review*, almost as large a percentage of the black female population was employed in 1984 as that of white females, and their median income was 90 percent that of white women's. By contrast, the study continued, just over 59 percent of all black men had jobs, compared with more than 72 percent of white men, and their median income was 32 percent less than that of white male workers.

Continued on page 10

By David Moberg

WASHINGTON

THERE'S A SIMPLE NAME FOR THE NEWEST strategy electric companies are using to deal with state regulators: blackmail. If commercially available energy-efficient technologies were fully used, experts believe, the U.S. could cut electricity use by three-fourths. But utilities, which could speed such a transition and often reap benefits in the long run, are resisting serious cooperation. Rather than serve the public interest, they are using their monopoly power to hold communities hos-

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tage to their outdated policies unless they can make even bigger profits from conservation than from traditional power production.

For much of this century, increasing electricity consumption seemed to work to everyone's advantage: electricity rates dropped as more power plants were built. But that old illusion shattered as the costs of fossil fuels and of nuclear power plant construction soared, and the perils of nuclear waste and global warming grew more acute.

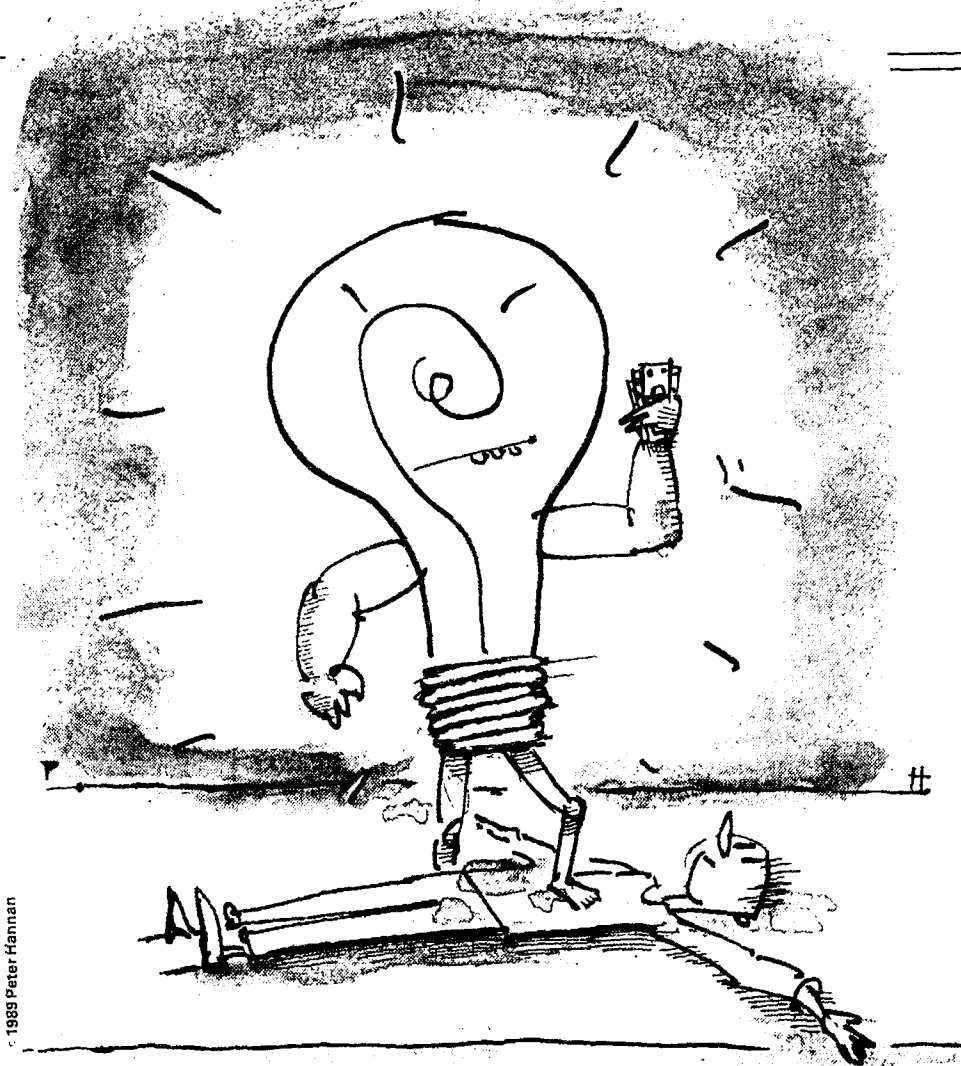
It has become increasingly clear that enhancing energy efficiency is cheaper than building new power plants, and often even cheaper than operating existing ones. For example, in many cases electric utilities could literally give away a new, expensive, long-lasting 15-watt compact fluorescent bulb that gives off the same light as a typical 60-watt incandescent bulb—and at less cost to themselves than running their generators to provide the extra 45 watts. So why don't they?

In a very few cases they do, usually motivated not by social benefits but by regulation or financial pressures. Over the past decade 37 states have required utilities to pursue "least-cost energy plans." Now eight states have moved even further, requiring "all-source integrated bidding," which means utilities must bid against independent power producers or companies that offer energy-conservation means, such as more efficient motors and lights or building weatherization. In one such integrated bid in Maine recently, four of the 10 lowest bids offered ways to reduce demand, not produce more power.

Advantages of efficiency: These regulatory pressures have slowed the demand for new power plants and saved consumers a lot of money. California was an early innovator, pushing efficiency as early as 1973: its utility conservation programs were cutting consumer bills \$840 million a year by 1985, according to the California Energy Commission. The amount of energy required to produce a dollar's worth of goods or services had dropped 35 percent since 1973—a rate faster than the national average—saving Californians \$23 billion over that time and increasing the state's competitive advantage.

But this is only a hint of what could be done. Even at the high point of their investment, major California utilities spent no more than 1.25 percent of their revenue on conservation. Then from 1984 to 1988, major utilities' conservation spending fell 56 percent, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

The utilities have hardly exhausted their conservation options. Japan and Germany already consume electricity at half the U.S. rate, boosting their industries' efficiency without decreasing their standard of living. The NRDC estimates that currently available technology could save a startling 92 percent



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Electric companies see utility of blackmail

of electricity used in commercial lighting and 82 percent of energy used by refrigerators.

Until now the focus has been on residential over commercial savings. But Ted Flanigan, director of the energy program at Amory Lovins's Rocky Mountain Institute, sees industry as the next frontier in reaching his estimate of a potential 75 percent reduction in electricity use. "Electric motors use as much primary fuel as all the highway vehicles [cars and trucks] in the U.S.," he said, "and electric motors consume half of U.S. electricity. It is possible with available technology to save 44 percent of that."

Electric utilities have done little to promote efficiency because they sell electricity as a commodity. In general, the more they sell, the more money they make. New power plants go into the utilities' "rate base," the total utility expenditure on which they're guaranteed a profit. The bigger the rate base, the fatter the profit. The catch is that no business or household consumers ever want to buy more kilowatt-hours in the abstract. They simply want the services—light, power, heating, cooling—that electricity provides.

Next year's model: Critics argue that utilities should be redesigned on a public-service model, enabling people to do what they want with energy at the lowest possible cost. Experience shows that most energy users demand unrealistically quick (less than two-year) returns on energy-efficiency investments such as new windows or insulation, or they can't easily afford such improvements. Often the interests of the final bill-payers—renters, for instance—differ from those of building owners, who seek low initial costs rather than long-term efficiency. Utilities can easily raise capital and live with a 15-year payback. But if efficiency leads to lower sales and eventually to lower profits, utilities resist, draining their local economies and subjecting themselves to the costly risk of building more power plants.

In California, "even extremely inexpensive conservation remains blocked by market barriers" despite regulatory guarantees to utilities against revenue loss from conservation, according to Chris Calwell and Ralph Cavanagh of NRDC. They reluctantly argue that "it is necessary to pay utilities 'extra' in

Many utilities use their monopoly power to hold communities hostage to their outdated and inefficient—but profitable—policies.

order to induce them to pursue what amount to cost-minimizing strategies."

"I think there's a lot of blackmailing going on," observes Ted Flanigan. "When you look at the utility as a franchise, we are somewhat at their mercy." He quotes John Rowe, chairman of the New England Electrical System—now a major conservation promoter—as saying, "I am like a rat. If there's a big piece of cheese building more power plants, I'll do that. If there's a bigger piece of cheese selling efficiency, I'll do that."

Ordered by regulators to invest in efficiency, some utilities have made the least productive investments, fattening their rate base while minimizing conservation. So most efficiency advocates want utilities to be allowed to include efficiency investments in their rate base only when they meet efficiency and environmental performance standards.

Although such conservation is better than business as usual, there is an alternative. "I tend to favor municipalization, because municipal utilities obviously don't have the [profit- or sales-] maximizing mandate," Flanigan says. "Municipal utilities [which gen-

erate 15 percent of the nation's power] can really do what is in society's best interests."

For example, the municipal utility in Burlington, Vt., buys and installs energy-efficient lighting equipment that it then leases for less than the cost of the energy savings. The municipal utility of Osage, Iowa, wanted to keep townspeople's money at home: its aggressive promotion of insulation, subsidized efficient lighting and other efficiency measures now saves the town of 3,800 about \$1.2 million a year. At the same time—unlike private utilities—it has reduced rates. Although the NRDC criticizes the Los Angeles municipal utility for skimpy efficiency investment, public power companies across the country have been among the leaders in promoting energy efficiency.

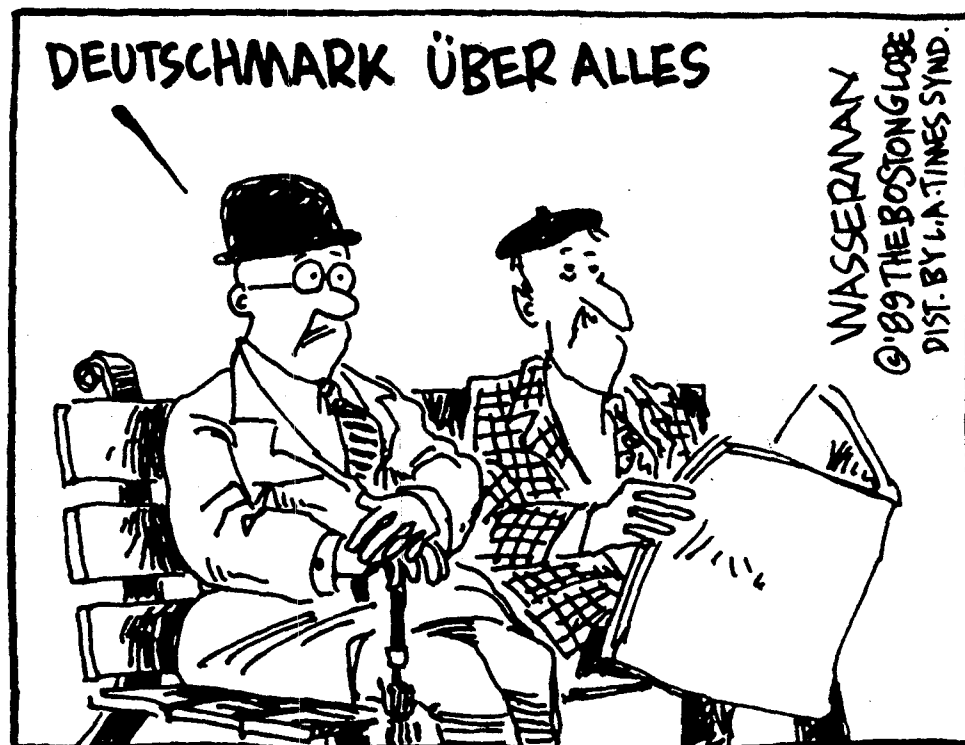
The city that works? The two issues—energy efficiency and public ownership—have been joined in Chicago. The city's franchise with Commonwealth Edison expires at the end of next year. Com Ed successfully pushed through a huge nuclear-power expansion program that now leaves it with 30 or more percent excess capacity at peak demand and rates that are among the highest in the country, costing the city many industrial jobs. But the 1948 franchise gives the city the right to buy a share of Com Ed at the bargain price of the original investment.

Energy consultant Charles Komanoff, in a study for the city, found that city electricity users could save substantially with an aggressive conservation program no matter who owns the system. But with its overbuilt nuclear plants Com Ed has continued to heavily promote electricity use, sabotage cogeneration efforts (independent power production from waste steam) and resist conservation (an outside consultant lambasted its state-mandated program as lackadaisical and poorly conceived).

Komanoff's study showed that a municipal buyout of part of Com Ed would be feasible and far cheaper than continuing business as usual. Despite the attempt by Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D-IL) to block municipalization for his friends at Com Ed by severely limiting use of tax-exempt bonds, municipal ownership with aggressive promotion of efficiency could be the cheapest alternative, Komanoff believes. In any case, even if the city negotiates a new franchise, a serious takeover threat is its main leverage with Com Ed. Mayor Richard Daley has finally promised to notify Com Ed that the city intends to acquire the utility—as recommended by a broad-based mayoral task force—but so far has given no indication he intends to put teeth behind that bark.

Com Ed is fighting hard, labeling municipal-ownership advocates "extremists," advertising heavily and threatening to withhold taxes. Elsewhere private utilities have fought against a new wave of interest in municipalization. The public takeover of Long Island Lighting Co. as part of shutting down New York's Shoreham nuclear plant was sidetracked by Gov. Mario Cuomo. New Orleans is likely to take over its utility, but the company is still trying to saddle the city with the costs of a white-elephant nuclear plant. Albuquerque, N.M., and San Diego are other cities considering takeovers.

Electric utilities will eventually be dragged, kicking and screaming, toward energy efficiency. Rather than cooperate for the public good, most will use their monopoly privileges to extort as much as possible. Despite their own shortcomings, publicly owned systems seem more prepared to act as utilities should—as services to the public. □



By Diana Johnstone

WHAT'S WRONG WITH GERMAN REUNIFICATION? On the face of it, nothing. To the vast majority of people living in the world today, there is no evident reason why the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in the West and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in the East shouldn't combine in a single German state if that's what the German people want.

But the "German question" is dangerous precisely because it is not as clear and simple as it may look. Knowing just how perilously complex it really is, German statesmen like Willy Brandt and President Richard von Weizsäcker have for years handled it with appropriate care. And as a result of intelligent sublimation, until a few weeks ago, most Germans seemed so barely interested in reunification that the idea was losing its capacity to frighten Germany's neighbors. After all, a German unity that would eventually slip in almost unnoticed, amid shrugs and yawns from Germans themselves, as part of a general reconciliation in the European family of nations would not bother anybody. And indeed the Germans in the FRG, especially Germans born after the war, have in the '80s been setting the tone for such a reconciliation by their own emphatic denial of nationalism.

German and world leaders grapple with reunification

But the sudden opening of the Berlin Wall on November 9 brought a fresh, exciting experience of being German. Two and a half weeks later, West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl himself broke out the nationalist trumpets and started blaring away.

Playing politics: Apparently without consulting his NATO allies, his European Community (EC) partners, or even the Free Democrats who share his coalition government, Kohl on November 28 presented to the Bundestag his own 10-point plan for gradual step-by-step reunification of Germany. But what Kohl was actually doing was opening the 1990 election campaign with his 10-Point Plan for Reunification as a platform for his Christian Democratic Union (CDU).

Kohl acted under pressure from the far-right Republican Party, which has been eating into the CDU electorate. The day before Kohl unveiled his 10 points, Republican leader Franz Schönhuber announced that his 1990 campaign would be centered on the "top priority" of reunifying Germany with Berlin as capital.

The trouble with Kohl's 10-point plan was less its contents than its function. It put the longtime semi-taboo theme of reunification

GERMANY

smack in the middle of the election campaign, in the West and quite possibly in the East as well. The bossy tone of the "rich uncle" in Bonn ordering the GDR to carry out "fundamental changes in its political and economic system" to get economic aid did

The "German question" is dangerous precisely because it is not as clear and simple as it may look.

not necessarily jibe with protestations of respect for East German self-determination. Lip service to the EC and the rest of Europe was meant to be reassuring to Germany's neighbors. Its vagueness could also be reassuring: there was no timetable for the evolution by stages, via a sort of confederation built on joint commissions on various fields of policy, to create a single state within "a new peace order in Europe."

The problem was that this was a political warhorse. During the dramatic events of recent weeks, Kohl was repeatedly upstaged by his foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, by elder statesman Willy Brandt or even—to his greatest annoyance—by the upstart mayor of West Berlin, Walter Momper. However, judging by the first confused reactions of the Social Democrats, Kohl miraculously regained the political initiative simply by waving the flag of reunification in the Bundestag.

Good neighbors: In the question of German reunification with its sensitive international ramifications, foreign and domestic reaction are closely and sometimes perversely intertwined. The feelings of Germany's neighbors East and West are of major concern to most Germans, but foreign expressions of alarm about reunification risk being counterproductive.

The objections have come from all sides,

especially from the beleaguered leadership of the Soviet Union. With all the troubles he has already, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov let it be known that the last thing he needs is to lose the Soviet Union's main military ally to the West. Soviet-European affairs specialist Vadim Zagladin said the key security role of East Germany was a "matter of life and death" to the Soviet Union.

About this time, President George Bush and Gorbachov met in Malta, and even Bush agreed that German reunification was not timely. But the American position seems narrowly centered on preserving NATO come what may. Secretary of State James Baker stressed that reunification would have to take place within NATO—an absurd position which arouses suspicions on all sides. To Soviet ears, it sounds like a proposal to advance NATO toward the Soviet border—a totally alarming suggestion. To Germans, who knew that the one thing the Soviets cannot accept is reunited Germany inside NATO, it sounds like a dishonest way of vetoing German reunification.

Writer Régis Debray predicted not long ago that the advent of a reunified Germany, weighing heavy in the middle of Europe, would bring the old Franco-Russian alliance out of mothballs. On December 6, French President Francois Mitterrand rushed to Gorbachov's side in Kiev with stronger support than Bush had provided in Malta. Agreeing that the time was not ripe for German reunification, Mitterrand also backed Gorbachov's call for a fresh round of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in 1990 to advance the "Helsinki process" of all European integration that could provide a more solid framework for German developments. Back in Paris, Mitterrand spoke of Gorbachov for the first time as "a partner" and stressed the need to help him.

On December 12, the four Allied occupation powers, the U.S., U.S.S.R., Britain and France, met in Berlin for the first time since they signed the quadripartite agreement regulating the divided city in 1972, in a gesture seen as a reminder of who's in charge.

German reaction to all this is bound to be mixed. The Western Allies have not worked out a coherent position among themselves, or even—notably in the U.S. case—individually. Seeing the Allies throw their weight around may merely bring Germans' attention to their own weight. An eloquently simple cartoon in *Le Monde* showed a little Mitterrand taking an equally little Gorbachov by the hand as they face a hulking Kohl.

Under the influence: Finally, the influence of the Allies on German politics is limited. There is only one foreign leader who matters enough to Germans to weigh in the political debate, and that is Gorbachov. Whatever his troubles at home, in the West Gorbachov's popularity has become a political factor. No Western politician wants to be blamed for causing the soviet leader's downfall. Western leaders are obliged to seem to help him enough to avoid taking the rap for his eventual failure.

Green Bundestag member Hubert Kleinert played the Gorbachov card against German nationalism in a December 1 speech to the Bundestag clarifying the Green position on the reunification issue. Clarification was needed. The day Kohl presented his 10-point plan, Green rotation had given the floor to Jutta Oesterle-Schwerin to speak for the party. An Israeli-born anarchist on the left wing of the Greens, Oesterle-Schwerin simply couldn't see any point in reunification. The Greens' valuable defense expert in the

Bundestag, former Bundeswehr officer Alfred Mechttersheimer, an unabashed reunification enthusiast, recently accused Greens of "an animal fear of German unity." The Greens' position against reunification has seemed dryly moralistic or negatively emotional. Kleinert offered a political argument.

"Helmut Kohl wants to win the coming elections as reunification chancellor," Kleinert charged. "And for that, the CDU is ready to jeopardize the real pre-conditions for a further process of democratic development." Kleinert accused the Christian Democratic chancellor of "exploiting an opportunity of historic proportions" for the purpose of holding onto political power.

Kleinert was interrupted by shouts from the floor by a Christian Democrat calling him a "fellow without a fatherland," an insult eerily echoing pre-war nationalism with its anti-Semitic innuendo. Kleinert retorted that he would take the insult calmly. Less than five decades after Auschwitz, he said, there was nothing wrong with having "the most extreme allergic reaction to every note sounded that, whether frivolously or purposefully, might provoke a wave of nationalism."

Kohl, Kleinert said, knows perfectly well that without Gorbachov the whole liberation process in Eastern Europe would never have gotten started. He knows the frightful problems facing the Soviet Union, he said, so he must know "how very much not only Gorbachov but the whole democratic development in Eastern Europe is jeopardized" by his sudden push for reunification. Kleinert also pointed to the danger of nationalist movements in Eastern Europe. "Do you want to further goad along such tendencies by carrying out a renationalization of politics on German soil?" he asked the chancellor rhetorically.

A Europe of fatherlands: Kleinert put his finger on the biggest worry about German nationalism, which is its possible contagion. One nationalism never comes alone. Nationalisms stimulate each other, in spirals of imitation and opposition. This process has devastated Eastern Europe in the past. The old nationalisms seem to have survived intact through 40 years of artificial internationalism imposed by paternalistic Communist Party rule. The danger is that a revival of German nationalism, by its greater impact, would set them all off, including the biggest one of all, Russian nationalism, with consequences impossible to foresee but unlikely to further the democratizing reforms initiated by Gorbachov.

Kleinert asked who would gain if, because of German demands, "a process gets underway in the Soviet Union that ends with Gorbachov being replaced by a grand marshal of the Soviet armed forces sitting in the Kremlin?"

The Greens, Kleinert said, do not want a "Europe of fatherlands," as called for by the nationalist right throughout Western Europe. "We want a supranational, all-European peace order with strongly decentralized and federal decision-making structures," he said. "We want to go beyond the era of nation states."

Kohl's success in making reunification the main theme of the 1990 elections changes the whole look of the race. Greens, including the "Realos" most eager for a coalition with the SPD, see the chances of "Red-Green" vanishing as the SPD runs after the CDU on the reunification theme. A "grand alliance" of CDU-SPD cannot be ruled out.

This leaves the Greens alone, but with a political role to play that could bring them votes from the anti-nationalist left and keep them in the Bundestag. However, the Greens are far from having a unified viewpoint on the German question. Many want to give the GDR a chance to develop an original "ecological socialism," while leading Realos insist that "socialism" is finished.

On December 11, the CDU adopted Kohl's 10-point plan as its electoral platform at an emotional conference. "Finally, the German people again have a task," rejoiced Ernst Albrecht, the governor of Lower Saxony. The

The biggest worry about German nationalism is its contagion. Nationalisms stimulate each other in spirals of intimidation and opposition. This process has devastated Eastern Europe in the past.

leader of the "social conscience" wing of the CDU, Norbert Blüm, raised the level of enthusiasm by proclaiming that "never in my life have I felt so in accord with my people. I am really proud to be German." Kohl warned the SPD what was in store, accusing the Social Democrats of being willing to "consign more than 16 million East Germans to communism." Kohl claimed that "the freedom of all Germans is at stake" in next year's "crucial, fateful" elections.

With such a storm of patriotic fervor rising, the Social Democrats quickly batted down their own hatches, whipping together a program for German-German relations

similar to Kohl's and also aiming at eventual "state unity." The SPD does not seem to offer any opposition to the absorption of the GDR into the West German capitalist system. Although some Social Democrats don't agree with him, foreign-policy spokesman Karsten Voigt has called the desire of the East German opposition to build an original form of democratic socialism an "illusion."

Where the SPD does differ from the CDU is in its effort to define a coherent international policy sensitive to the security needs of the East. Whereas Kohl continues to refuse to explicitly rule out German claims to territories beyond the Oder-Neisse line separating East Germany from Poland since World War II, the SPD accepts the Oder-Neisse boundary.

Stumbling blocs: The most important divergence concerns NATO. Alluding to the dangerous contradiction in the official U.S. position, SPD Ostpolitik expert Egon Bahr observes that "you can't want German unity on the one hand and on the other stick to the blocs." The existing military alliances must be superseded by an all-European security system, to be worked out by the CSCE.

The dramatic shift in policy focus amounts to a grave political setback for Saarland Governor Oskar Lafontaine, the frontrunner to be the SPD's 1990 candidate for chancellor. Lafontaine's specialties are ecological and social affairs, which have fallen into the background. Lafontaine is one of the few Social Democrats to be untouched by the reunification fever. He continues to reject the prospect of a "greater Germany" in favor of European integration. Lafontaine worries about strains on the social-welfare budgets occasioned by the influx of immigrants from the East.

A champion of more flexible work hours, Lafontaine has clashed with the unions in recent years. But they agree in seeing hard times ahead as a result of the changes in the

Continued on next page

Passing the buck—or passing the Deutschmark

If West Germans really want to help their poorer brothers and sisters in the East with no strings attached, a Bremen professor has a suggestion: pay the Western share of the World War II reparations burden borne by the East Germans as a result of the Cold War.

After 1945, it was generally agreed that Germany would have to pay reparations for at least part of the war damages that devastated the Soviet Union. Finally, Germany paid close to 100 billion marks in reparations out of over 1,700 billion marks' worth of damages to the Soviet Union. These reparations should have come from Germany as a whole, and especially from the industrial heartland, the Ruhr. But thanks to the Cold War division of the country, practically all the reparations (which continued until December 1953) were paid from East Germany.

In 1960, a leading Heidelberg economist, Max Schönwandt, figured West Germany owed East Germany 74 billion marks and suggested 10 yearly payments. The suggestion was ignored and forgotten, except by Bremen historian Arno Peters, who has taken up the cause. Peters says that a post-war division of labor meant that East Germans paid reparations while West Germany sopped up Marshall Plan aid. In today's Deutschmarks, every West German paid the equivalent

of 127 marks (\$75) in reparations, compared to 16,124 marks (\$9,500) paid by each East German. Peters figures that as of December 1989, West Germany owed East Germany more than \$400 billion dollars—727,165,791,041 Deutschmarks, to be precise.

This is a sum that could enable East Germany to modernize its industry to world-market standards without causing social upheavals.

According to leading liberal Christian Democrat Kurt Biedenkopf, an effective program of aid to East Germany would cost 300 billion marks—no impossible sum for West Germany, where private savings alone total 2,600 billion marks.

Awash with spare cash, West Germany can and very likely will end up transferring large sums to East Germany. The label "reparations" is unlikely to be retained, simply because it would imply a moral debt and cut the political strings attached.

The nature of those strings will be the center of controversy. Biedenkopf himself favors aid from the West German states rather than from the federal government, and an acceptance of the term "socialism" if it means a new form of "ecological growth." Other Christian Democrats, however, want to press for more conventional free-market measures. —D.J.

Reunification

Continued from page 9

East. "I don't think developments in the GDR are going to make it any easier to get closer to the 35-hour work week," German Trade Union Confederation Chairman Ernst Breit said at the start of a recent conference on unemployment. This is an understatement. Just as German employers rejoice at the enlarged pool of eager, qualified labor, the unions see their hard-won gains gravely threatened.

A first concrete sign of the effect of the opening of the German-German border on the EC came last week with news that five EC states are not signing the agreement they have been negotiating for four years on abolition of border controls. The agreement among the Benelux states, France and West Germany was supposed to go into effect by January 1990. But now there is fear that the

open border to the GDR will facilitate massive immigration from Eastern Europe and even the Third World. For Mitterrand, strengthening the EC has been the top political priority of his presidency. But recent electoral upsets in favor of the far-right National Front have shown clearly that French voters are more concerned about the influx of foreign immigrants. Thus the French government finds itself obliged to put border controls ahead of EC integration.

The migration issue is brewing as a particularly dangerous catalyst of nationalism. Analysts agree that the one sure result of large-scale introduction of the sort of free-market economic policy being demanded, for instance, by Kohl, is massive unemployment. And this in societies that for 40 years have had one consolation: full employment.

The Western-dominated institutions and forums of European integration, whether the EC, the broader 21-member Council of

Europe (about to open to Hungary) or the CSCE, all set respect for human rights as the criterion for admission to the club. In the current rhetoric of Western leaders, what is underway is above all an expansion and universalization of the Western conception of human rights. Certainly, this has been a major thrust of the Gorbachovian revolution up to now. But the process is very far from automatic. Human rights rarely flourish in conditions of drastically declining standards of living and mass unemployment. It would be excessively naive to assume, under these explosive circumstances, that Western leaders are quite as exclusively devoted to "democracy" and "human rights" as they make out. Some of them—and above all in Washington—might well be discreetly relieved to see authoritarian nationalist regimes pledged to introducing capitalism with none of this nonsense about democratic socialism. □

Black women

Continued from page 6

During the last decade, forums on deteriorating relations between black men and women were common features in many communities across the country. The explosion of female fiction writers and the articulation of their concerns have even generated some literary friction among the genders. The feminist-nationalist split at one time threatened to sunder the African-American activist community. As the '90s arrive, rapprochement seems the dominant mood in the African-American gender war.

It is a peace forged by the recognition of a treacherous common enemy: the devitalization of black America through the destruction of its young black males. Unfortunately, this shotgun reconciliation leaves so much work undone: African-American males still place an exaggerated importance on the prerogatives of patriarchal culture, women are uniformly devalued within traditional places of black male leadership, brutality is still too common a feature of life within the African-American family. But, for now, there is a more urgent matter. □

IS RELIGION JUST FOR THE IGNORANT?



In many intellectual circles the myth still circulates that religion is the preserve of the dim-witted and unlettered. Yet, recently *The New York Times Magazine* carried an article on the "return to religion" among intellectuals. From Harvard to Berkeley, and amid inquisitive people generally, there's an undeniable renewal of interest in the questions traditional religion raises and seeks to answer. This fascination is largely a result of the failures of secular substitutes for religion (such as rationalism, narcissism, technological utopianism, aestheticism, and extremist political ideologies) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: goodness, suffering, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

By no means, however, does this religious renaissance entail embracing the ersatz gods of dog-eat-dog individualism, consumerism, or superpatriotism. Nor does it imply a retreat from working for peace, justice, or human dignity. Rather, there's an awareness that, as Jean Bethke Elshtain put it, religious commitment "can help further social reform," and that religion can supply the ethical bedrock upon which to make political choices which are far more durable than those based on passing ideologies and enthusiasms. Nor does the new openness to religion signify a hostility to science, but rather an appreciation of the limits of science and technology.

The New York Times Magazine article dis-

cussed the NEW OXFORD REVIEW as part of this return to religion, and rightly so. We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW are spearheading today's intellectual engagement with what Daniel Bell terms "the sacred." We are particularly interested in exploring religious commitments that yield humane social consequences, as exemplified by such giants as St. Francis, Gandhi, Bonhoeffer, Barth, Tawney, Schumacher, Mounier, Dorothy Day, Archbishop Tutu, Lech Walesa, Martin Luther King Jr., and Archbishop Romero. And we probe the literary and philosophical riches offered by such greats as Kierkegaard, Tolstoy, Buber, Auden, Eliot, Silone, Maritain, Waugh, Merton, C.S. Lewis, Simone Weil, Flannery O'Connor, and Graham Greene.

An ecumenical monthly edited by lay Catholics, we've been characterized by George Will as "splendid," by the University of Chicago's Martin E. Marty as "lively," by Berkeley's John T. Noonan Jr. as "indispensable," and by *Newsweek* as "thoughtful and often cheeky."

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By Gordon Lewis

EAST GERMANY

IN BETTER TIMES, WHEN EAST GERMANY'S discredited Communist SED party ruled supreme, virtually all of its leaders lived in Wandlitz, an exclusive settlement on the outskirts of Berlin. Surrounded by high walls and protected by guards 24 hours a day, Politburo members could enjoy a lavish life without interference of the pesky "people." The stores there were packed with the finest Western goods—from otherwise scarce bananas and oranges to Japanese electronics and American jeans.

After a hard day at the Central Committee or State Planning Commission, Erich Honecker and his inner circle sweated out their problems in the sauna or swam a few laps in the indoor pool. The younger ones may even have opted for the fitness center, with its brand-new Nautilus machines and potted palms. Life was a bowl of cherries for the vanguard of the proletariat.

Not anymore. Most of the former leaders have moved out and taken apartments in the city. Those who remain—such as Honecker himself—have no option but to stay. They are under house arrest. Ironically, the elaborate security in Wandlitz serves the same function as the Berlin Wall did against the population as a whole: it prevents them from escaping. The masses are no longer content to see the old guard replaced. They want them to stand trial for their crimes.

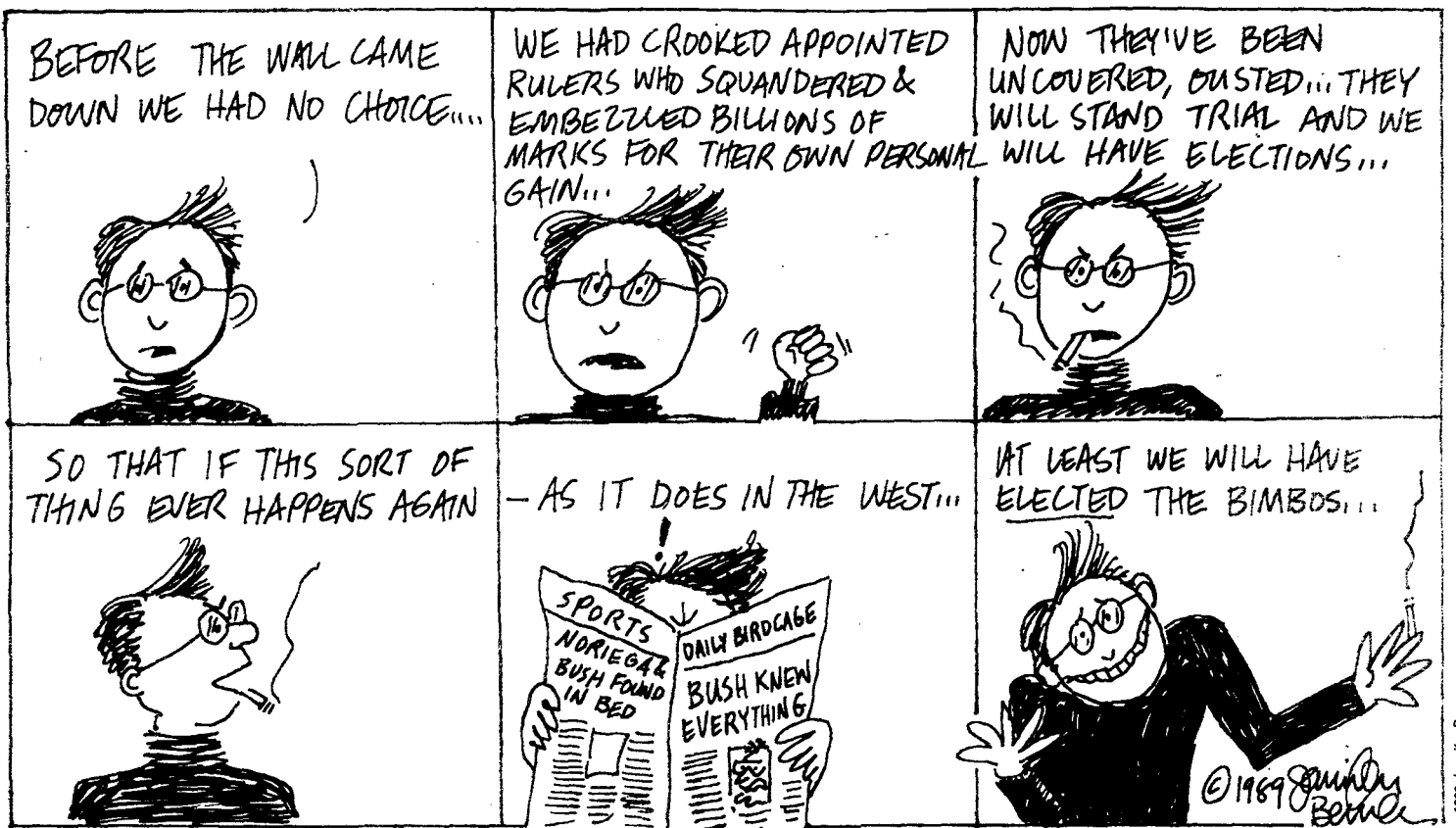
In the past few weeks, East Germany's November revolution has entered a new, aggressive and potentially dangerous phase. The jubilation that followed the toppling of Honecker and the opening of the wall has given way to creeping pessimism as the people become aware of the magnitude of the problems facing the nation. In fact, rather than calming the people down, the opening of the borders actually escalated tensions in the German Democratic Republic (GDR).

Standing in long lines waiting for a 100-Deutsche-mark gift from the West German government was extremely degrading for the "ossis" (as East Germans are called in the West). Christian, an engineer from Torgau on the Elbe, a rich fellow back home with a nice house and a Leda to drive, felt like "a poor cousin" in West Berlin. To stay there, he had to either "mooch" off friends or find a warm corner in a subway station. Since the wall opened, the exchange rate for East German marks has sunk deeper and deeper, at one point reaching 20-to-1. The products in the overflowing shop windows of pre-Christmas West Germany are as out of reach as ever.

The beginning of the end: Economic hardship could have been endured without the risk of serious unrest at home were it not for the charges of corruption that, starting as a trickle, hit the public like a tidal wave in early December. Mismanagement as a result of an inefficient system of planning and production is bad but forgivable. However, when an economic crisis is coupled with personal greed—in other words, when it is clear that the leadership deceived the population for personal gain—the masses are outraged and demand retribution. Under these circumstances, General Secretary Egon Krenz' about-face in the direction of reform was seen as just another tactic aimed at binding the population and preserving whatever power the SED still had.

The mounting allegations have proven a shock to outsiders, but perhaps even more so to the SED's base. The cadres in factories and in city and district councils realized that

The party's over for corrupt old guard



their honest efforts served an oligarchy that cared little about the population or socialist ideals. Aligning themselves with the opposition movements, the party base advocated forming a commission to investigate reports of corruption, which took up work on November 19.

Concrete evidence emerged quickly. On November 27, former Politburo member Werner Krolikowski was arrested and charged with using state funds to build a house for his son. The contract submitted to the construction ministry claimed it was "a bungalow for the training of *nomenklatura* cadres." The same day, reporters from the GDR youth TV show "Elf-99" attempted to enter the Wandlitz settlement. Their request was denied. The next day, however, they were allowed in and broadcast nationwide what they saw. What the population saw exceeded their wildest imagination.

However, even more disturbing was a report that the day before the journalists arrived, six moving trucks had transported the leaders' most lavish personal effects to a storage hall of the state company Forum. This was confirmed by Forum workers who saw the trucks and the goods, including video recorders, stereo systems, precious wines, Western computers and more.

At the same time, all across the country, citizens' groups sought and gained access to former "guesthouses" of the political elite, many of which were built in the middle of nature preserves. In the home of former President Willi Stoph in the small town of Murtitz, citizens found 10 refrigerators packed with international delicacies, and in Nossentiner Heide, citizens forced entrance into Honecker's manor, which, lucky for him, had already been cleared of most personal effects. Still, the indoor swimming pool, heated floor and marble terraces were enough to indicate the lifestyle the former general secretary had enjoyed on his three-week vacations there; the rest of the year the house was empty.

Twist of fate: On December 1, the Volkskammer, East Germany's parliament, convened and heard the official preliminary report of the corruption commission. Along with information already leaked, the commission reported that Alexander Schalk-

Golodkowski, the head of Forum Inc. and chief provider of hard currency for the government, had deposited more than 100 billion marks in hard currency in secret Swiss bank accounts. Forum, which controls the state Intershops, where Western goods are

EAST GERMANY

available for Western money, was obviously being used by the leadership to finance their private shopping sprees and better their retirement funds.

And Forum was not alone. Golodkowski's commercial coordination section oversaw more than 100 such companies. Theoretically state and not party organs, these companies were all run by party favorites who, under Golodkowski's benevolent gaze, were allowed to embezzle much of the companies' profits.

Golodkowski didn't wait around to have his fate decided. On the night of December 2, he fled to West Berlin and from there to parts unknown. The East German government put out a warrant for his arrest and asked for international help in apprehending him. A few days later, Golodkowski resurfaced in West Berlin, where he now sits in

Charges of corruption hit the public like a tidal wave.

prison as prosecutors and attorneys decide whether he can be extradited.

The panic that seized Golodkowski also engulfed much of the former leadership and its henchmen. Officials made desperate attempts to destroy documents or move them out of the country. An airplane full of files stopped before taking off for Romania, the only place the former leaders can turn to for help. These documents were not only financial, however. The former Ministry of State Security was busily destroying the evidence of the dirty deeds it committed against its own population. The head of the newly constituted Office of National Security reported to the parliament that his much-hated prede-

cessor, Erich Mielke, had cleaned out all the safes before leaving his office.

All these revelations, broadcast live on TV, made a mockery of the SED's attempts at evolutionary change. The people, having already grown more vocally aggressive in the weekly Monday protests, took physical action, forcing their way into STASI (state security) offices in Leipzig and Erfurt. Windows were broken and STASI workers threatened and disarmed. Caught in the act of destroying files, one STASI district chief claimed this was common practice and said the evidence going up the chimney consisted of dossiers on citizens, no longer needed in light of the Office of National Security's new role. Needless to say, the enraged citizens didn't believe a word, and state prosecutors were called in to seal the buildings and preserve whatever documents still remained.

During the weekend of December 2 and 3, East Germany appeared to be sliding into anarchy. Prime Minister Hans Modrow called on the people to remain calm. There was growing fear that the angry crowds could storm army and state-security weapons depots. The government, lacking electoral legitimacy, would then be forced to move against the population, thereby destroying any support it may have had and perhaps paving the way for a military takeover, some observers feared. Luckily, church and opposition leaders appealed to the crowds and the incidents of violence remained small and sporadic.

End of the line: While Modrow struggled to keep order, the SED's future course was being decided. Disgusted and embittered, the party base joined with mid-level reformists in calling for the ouster of the Central Committee and Politburo. They were not content to wait until the party congress scheduled for December 15—a date that had already been moved up from May 1990. A clear, immediate break had to be made with the past. All people in any way associated with the former leadership had to go, especially Krenz.

Paying lip service to reform was not enough. Unless action was taken, a party split seemed inevitable. The leadership gave in. On December 3 the Politburo resigned,

Continued on page 22

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SEE HOW THEY RUN

By Julia Gilden

Jonathan, 18, lives in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco with hundreds of other teen runaways, or sometimes in Santa Cruz, or under a freeway—anywhere but Phoenix. Proudly showing off his new tattoo needle, retrieved from his stash of personal belongings somewhere deep in the park's inner reaches, he says, "A lot of runaways in San Francisco are below standard. They're not doing what they're capable of. But they're mad. They come here where it's wilder, where there are other kids like them."

What these young survivors have in common is a childhood in American suburbs. According to professionals throughout the country who work with displaced children and youths, they—and countless others who don't feel safe at home—are wandering the streets of large cities far from their parents in numbers that are increasing faster than soup kitchens, runaway hotlines and shelter caseworkers can keep up with. Some experts are even calling for the return of orphanages.

Mike Kennedy, program director at Larkin Street Youth Center, says 1,500 to 2,000 teens sleep on the streets of San Francisco every night. "San Francisco, along with Los Angeles and New York, are magnet cities for runaways from all over the country and beyond. In San Francisco, only 8 percent are from the area, which may account for the lack of city and county funding. What few programs exist are being developed by private agencies."

The new "hobo trail" on the West Coast stretches from Seattle to San Diego. Kids at Larkin Street often see other homeless teens they met in Portland or Los Angeles. Former Larkin Street counselor Sasha Owen, an easygoing 24-year-old, says, "They survive by sharing and by forming instant packs—often taking on traditional family roles, sleeping in parks or squats."

"I want to make lots of money. That's the only thing you can count on," says Phil, 22, a handsome youth whose tattoos cover heroin needle tracks,

LEFT: Christina is one of many San Francisco hobos who call Market Street "home," making it their kitchen, bedroom and stage.

RIGHT: In Golden Gate Park, vagabond park-dwellers inventory their possessions and discuss the intricacies of converting a battery-powered vibrator motor into a tattooing machine.

a different form of abuse he began when he ran away from his uncle's daily beatings at the age of 14. The hard lines on Phil's face make him appear older than his years, except when he is let down or hurts himself. Then he looks all of 14.

His mom, a single parent, is a well-known legislative aide in Florida. She sent Phil to her brother in Indiana when he became unmanageable. Seven years later, a veteran of urban street life, he is cautiously trying the straight life, working as a ticket agent. Phil is smart, wary, learning to channel his anger into performance art. He doesn't bring hard drugs (cocaine, methamphetamines, heroin) into the house. That means he returns to the street when he wants to shoot.

"If you want to get off the streets, you've got to get a job and leave the street behind. I'll give people a place to stay, but no moochers—some people have lived on the streets so long they don't know how to be responsible," says Curtis, echoing in a quiet voice the middle-class values he grew up with. He is 17, Phil's unofficial little brother, a refugee from countless battles with his stepfather in Florida. "Abuse isn't something to joke about. People don't exaggerate it."

Curtis looks like a serious skinhead—black

leather, blond mohawk, storm-trooper boots. He tried on Nazi ideas but rejected the intolerant racism. Now he's a moped messenger—he has a job and a tribe. His self-assigned curriculum is staying alive and guitar. For Curtis, a Saturday morning at home means trying new gel to get his center strip of fine blond hair to stand straight up.

"When you're on the street, you're constantly looking over your shoulder," says Curtis. "You learn fast to move with others for protection."

In the last three years, youth workers estimate, the number of runaway teens has increased more than a third, to approximately 1.5 million. But kids who fear being returned to uncomfortable home situations are often reluctant to talk to authority figures, and this approximation is based on the growing numbers reported by counselors working on the streets and in shelters.

The magnitude of the problem can be seen in Los Angeles, where a new courthouse has just opened to serve the county's 45,000 annual cases of child and adolescent abuse and neglect.

According to counselor Owen, the 13- to 21-year olds at Larkin Street Youth Center are more accurately termed "throwaways." "The one thing they have in common is they all come from dys-

functional families. These kids are abused or neglected until they feel they have a better chance on the streets than at home."

Whether they are called throwaways, runaways or homeless, teens who are estranged from their families fall into a no man's land where they are too old for children's services and too young for adult programs. They consist of two groups: 12- to 17-year olds and 18- to 21-year olds.

Many younger teens return home, but older teens who have been on the streets many years have a poor record for building normal lives or returning to their families. They are treated by the system as adults, but, despite their years on the street, they remain insecure and immature in several ways. They say they are afraid to stay in adult shelters because they are often taken advantage of by older transients.

"Once you're on the streets, it gets very bizarre—people play hard games on you," says Pinky, a quiet-spoken, clear-eyed young man who is working on his resume in the Larkin Street Youth Center's after-care suite—two rooms set aside for 18- to 21-year olds who have "graduated" from the youth program. What that means is that they are no longer considered





youths and are decreed by statistics and law to know how to function as adults. Pinky, the focus of many custody battles, left his Albuquerque home five years ago. He sadly says, "We had food and a roof, but the one thing we never had was peace."

He says his mom is a "bingoholic," his dad a zealous Mormon who controls the family with verbal and physical abuse. Pinky found a room recently in an ex-Marine's apartment, a well-known "Dutch uncle" to homeless teens. He pays his rent with errands and chores. There may be a requirement of intimate service—Pinky wouldn't say—because streetside benevolence without strings is rare.

"These kids are from 'post-nuclear' families," says Owen. "If their parents are divorced, the mother and father are often miles away from each other and from other family members. If contact with extended family has been broken by the parents, kids often do not have access to grandmothers, aunts or cousins. American families are getting smaller and smaller, and there are fewer and fewer sanctuaries for troubled kids."

"Things will be different when I go back to Virginia and live with my dad," says Shannon, dressed in black and bleach for working the street. She occasionally sells her body and drugs. "Now that he knows I can make it on my own, he won't dare hit me anymore. I have power over him instead of the other way around."

Graduating from her affluent suburban high school is important to 17-year-old Shannon, who considers herself above her recent companions. As sexual diseases go, she has been lucky. She hopes.

Homeless teens come from all economic backgrounds and classes, but most are from white, middle-class suburban homes. In sharp contrast to the realities of homelessness, they have middle-class expectations of success and education. Having led sheltered lives in many respects, they

have no role models for life on the streets.

The largest study to date on homeless teens is by Ann Burgess, a professor of psychiatric nursing at the University of Pennsylvania. She says, "The mental and physical health of adolescents should be a major national concern. When they are products of disrupted families, they face loneliness, alienation and isolation."

"When parents remarry, the children always lose status," adds Burgess. "For those who leave home, there is another group, much larger, who stay, depressed, sleeping and taking drugs to 'numb out.'"

Drugs are an integral part of distressed teen life. Says Owen, "There is no way to live on the streets and not be involved in drugs."

Heather, a client at Larkin Street, says she'd rather not be involved with drugs but recently had a hard time turning down an offer of \$300 to run cocaine for a local dealer.

"I hate America. It's a selfish, conservative country—nobody cares about kids," she says. The tall, athletic teen must leave the drop-in youth shelter when it closes for the night. But first she is fixing dinner from ingredients donated to the shelter. After dinner, she will probably head for San Francisco's Haight district to find a party where she can drink and crash for the night. She turned 18 a few days ago, so she is no longer eligible for what few beds there are for homeless youth in San Francisco. And adult shelters are scarier than the streets.

As a last resort she might go to her mom's East Bay suburban house, where there is sure to be a parade of relatives and strangers who will barely notice her through the nightly speed-and-alcohol party haze. Her mom used to lock the kids out when she was angry, but that hasn't happened in quite a while.

"I'm hellin' drunk," laughs Heather, high on Cisco, a fortified wine popular with her peers. "I could die. I don't care." She pauses to study the noodles poised on her fork. "I drink because

I'm scared. I'm scared all the time."

Even at successful shelters like Larkin Street, where 40 kids are seen every day and teens encounter a series of professionals—outreach, caseworker, housing and job professionals—health workers and basic-skills tutors—they don't get the one thing everyone agrees they need to repair the damage done by fractured families: caring continuity in long-term relationships with healthy older role models. In fact, youth counselors are required by contract to maintain a professional distance from their clients. Burnout is common.

"I haven't been home in four years—since I was 12," says Christina. She is a blond, green-eyed 16-year-old who left her adopted family in Manhattan over control issues—she had taken her mom's car on a joyride. She panhandles and sleeps in abandoned cars.

"I'm usually much thinner," she explains. "I had a baby two months ago. She was adopted by a Salinas couple. They're hippies but down-to-earth, really great. They'll be great parents. In fact, I wish they were my parents, except I hate parents."

In a painful admission that middle-class American families are fraying at the seams, professionals who work with abused children now advocate a return to orphanages, where kids will at least not be bounced around from one foster home to another until they are dropped from the system as dislocated older youths.

Retired Philadelphia judge Lois Forer says her recent article in *Washington Monthly* magazine suggesting a return to orphanages has sparked a surprising amount of interest. She deplores a system that offers undersupervised foster homes or juvenile detention centers to troubled teens, who often bolt and then turn up as medical emergencies or in the criminal-justice system, if at all.

Phil and Curtis used to live in a group house in San Francisco's inner Mission district. Within 100

feet of their front door they could buy any kind of drug available. Nicknamed Mt. Everest—a joke about the flight of stairs to the third floor but with a subtle second meaning—the flat of teen residents was subsidized by Innovative Housing, a non-profit organization that helps establish households of handicapped, elderly and single-parent families. But Mt. Everest was recently closed and no more of these exclusively teen households are being planned. The kids require more supervision than the group has the ability to provide.

Will Jonathon, Phil, Curtis, Pinky, Shannon, Heather and Christina go home for Christmas?

Mike Kennedy says last year December was the busiest month of the year. "This year we have a Christmas store—donated gifts—where kids can choose gifts to send to family or friends, including other homeless people. We're doing a mural and making cards. We'll have a Christmas dinner and will finish the year with an overnight Clean and Sober New Year's Eve party. Christmas brings up family issues, and kids are more likely to open up. We'll be watching out for that. We'll do the best we can," he says.

"Kids are running from chaos at home to cities that are more chaotic," he continues. "They have been overstimulated and underparented from birth—it drives me crazy every time I see a two-year-old watching violence on television while the parents don't seem to notice what's happening."

"We try to redirect the need for overstimulation so kids can pay attention to themselves," he says. "It's impossible to keep up with the constant barrage of new drugs, trends, fashions, computers, knowledge—more than we can ever use. We pay lip service to problems, but people don't know how to slow down; how to stop running. This country is in crisis." □

Julia Gilden, an editor at Pacific News Service, regularly writes about the disintegration of the white middle class.

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IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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The '80s have prepared the way for a new left politics in the '90s

It isn't often that a decade is as sharply defined as the '80s have been. Beginning with Reagan's attempt to bring back the glory years of late 19th-century imperialism, and ending with the most peaceful and widespread democratic revolution in history, the '80s will be looked back upon as a decade of wild extremes—and of crisis for the orthodox, both East and West. For the right in the U.S., the '80s began as years of almost dreamlike opportunity and ended in moral and political bankruptcy. For the left, the '80s brought retreat and disorientation, but also a revival of hope and opportunity. Above all, the '80s have been a time when the Cold War threatened to reach its logical—and catastrophic—conclusion, but then ended abruptly as Eastern Europe's dizzyingly fast democratization deprived the hardliners' rationale of all plausibility.

As we enter the '90s and the political verities of the past 40 years crumble before our eyes, the whole world seems up for grabs. In Eastern Europe, politics has suddenly become a public activity, one in which ordinary people bring down governments that just a few weeks ago seemed impervious to popular desires or needs. In Western Europe, the continued existence of the NATO alliance and a divided Germany promise to become central issues. And in the U.S., the military Keynesianism that has dominated the Cold War years can no longer be sustained as we enter what Sen. Jim Sasser (D-TN) calls "the dawn of the primacy of domestic economics."

There is not yet a new American left; in fact, the left remains in a state of confusion and disarray. Within the Democratic Party, the liberals remain a timid vacillating lot. Outside of the major political parties, the only significant political left forces are single-issue movements around the environment, abortion and Central America. The traditional "Marxist" left, long atrophied into a tangle of tiny sects, is entering a final agony. And yet the views that we at *In These Times* have put forward these past 13 years are now widely acknowledged to be popular and politically feasible, while the right,

which remains entrenched in office and in the media, has seen its most cherished ideas lose their political viability.

Consider the sacrosanct military budget, justified by the alleged need for a strong defense against the Evil Empire. This was never genuinely popular, but virtually nobody in public life had the courage to say that the emperor had no clothes. Now, however, it is no longer possible to justify the war machine, and the establishment is suddenly faced with the problem of holding back the wave of sentiment for new governmental priorities. As Sen. Tim Wirth (D-CO) says, support among his constituents "for maintaining the defense budget is zero." His state is the home of Star Wars and several other major military programs. "But," he acknowledges, "all people are talking about is the 'peace dividend' and how we're going to be able to spend that money on more important things like research, the environment and the homeless."

Or take the issue of abortion. While the right to choose was protected by the courts, the anti-abortion forces were on the attack and pro-choice groups were on the defensive. But with the Supreme Court nibbling away at *Roe v. Wade* and threatening to overturn it, the defenders of a woman's right to make her own decision were forced to enter the political arena. Not surprisingly, they found that the right's agenda was a loser with the public, and that the best defense of democratic rights is to be made in the political arena.

In short, and leaving out many issues, it seems clear to us that a left agenda, now more than ever, is potentially a winning one. The problem for the left is not a lack of principles and programs. These exist in the web of single-issue groups that now function simply to propagate their particular concerns and to lobby wavering legislators. The problem is the left's meager confidence in the American people, which all too often engenders a lack of will or seriousness of purpose.

It is difficult for the American left to think of itself as contesting seriously for public office. Since the mid-'20s, when the Socialist and Progressive parties finally collapsed, the left in this country has—at its best—functioned as a pressure group. This was true of the "Old Left" of the '30s and '40s, and it was true of the "New Left" of the '60s. There were many reasons for this, especially during the Cold War years when it may well have been impossible for an independent left to function as a political force in its own right. But we have begun a new era, which requires new political thinking. As we enter the '90s a new approach to politics should be on the left's agenda.

LETTERS

Safety in numbers

WHY SHOULD WE AMERICANS BE SO UPSET OVER the atrocious assassination of six priests in El Salvador when we seem insensitive to the murder of more than 1,000 Salvadoran men, women and children strafed and bombed with American-supplied munitions during the same week?

Did the tortured bodies of those six priests experience more pain than the murdered shantytown poor? Did their smashed brains hold more potential for life? Are their souls more precious to God than the souls of the 80,000 Salvadoran people, mostly innocent civilians, killed in this war prolonged by U.S. ambitions and munitions?

Of course, when six priests are taken from their beds, tortured and murdered, their brains smashed on the ground like so much excrement, it is, as the U.S. State Department said, "regrettable." So, too, are the deaths of thousands.

Perhaps the murder of six innocent priests is more horrifying because six are few enough for us to imagine, while imagination fails utterly when it comes to the slaughter of 1,000 or 80,000.

Americans should be thankful that the Bush administration now is speeding up the delivery of arms and munitions to the Salvadoran fascists so that the innocent can be killed in greater numbers, with greater speed and with, perhaps, less pain. The greater the number killed, the less noticeable it will be.

Meanwhile, in this season of peace, we North Americans can continue to sleep soundly, knowing that our government in its determination to dominate the affairs of Central America will leave no country undisturbed, no innocent life spared.

Nathaniel Hart
Grand Portage, Minn.

Amendment

IN REGARD TO THE CORRUPTION BROUGHT ABOUT by political action committee funds being needed for campaign contributions, why not just ban *all* political advertising and require the media to interview candidates for offices?

The only beneficiaries of television ads, for example, are advertising agencies and television stations. What does this have to do with democracy?

I suggested this idea to my state representative, and he replied that it is unconstitutional. OK. This issue is worth amending the Constitution for, I think.

Kate Bradley
Redmond, Wash.

Polish debt

I WELCOME THE INCREASED ATTENTION YOUR CONTRIBUTORS have paid to recent events in Poland. The articles by both Joanne Landy (ITT, Oct. 4) and James Petras (ITT, Nov. 15) served as useful correctives to the debate on Poland now underway in this country. Petras correctly indicts the Jeffrey Sachs "shock" treatment as a disaster for the Polish working class. Landy rightly notes the hypocrisy inherent in tying strings to U.S. aid in Poland.

However, both articles are only correctives to very narrow aspects of this debate.

It is just a drop in the bucket to suggest that no strings be attached to U.S. aid to Poland. And taking potshots at American Congress members or Harvard professors does not come near to tackling the real barriers to democratic change in Poland. The major stumbling block to a genuine economic takeoff is the crushing burden of debt under which the country now labors. The debt is somewhere around \$40 billion, up from around \$22 billion when Solidarity first emerged in 1980. This year alone, Poland will owe more than \$2 billion in debt servicing.

By what right do Western banks and financial agencies demand that Polish workers pay back these loans, given to an unelected government that reigned with terror backed by the Soviet army? It is our obligation as American supporters of democratic change in Poland to demand that the debt be forgiven—written off by the Western bankers who made this Faustian deal with Polish generals and bureaucrats.

The American progressive community and, in particular, the American trade-union movement should also recognize that Solidarity rules in Poland in name only. This is not the Solidarity of 1981—the Solidarity that held national congresses with elected delegates directly accountable to more than 10 million dues-paying trade-union members. This Solidarity has fewer than 2 million members—roughly equivalent to the membership of the Jaruzelski-sponsored "official" trade unions. This Solidarity has yet to hold a national congress. This Solidarity has yet to debate and decide, openly and democratically, on a national program.

Some 25 percent of the electorate boycotted the recent elections. The Solidarity candidates in that election were hand-picked by Lech Walesa, who rules inside the movement largely backed by the Catholic Church and his own personality. The Solidarity-sponsored organizations that do exist are riddled with debate and political factions. There are also numerous movements outside of mainstream Solidarity—of various political stripes.

One strong backer of free enterprise in Poland, a member of the "liberal" (i.e., laissez-faire) wing of Solidarity and an adviser to the Ministry of Industry, told me recently that he views the old trade-union membership of Solidarity as a "sleeping giant," one that he hopes "doesn't wake up." Rebuilding that trade-union membership, democratically, from the bottom up—waking that sleeping giant—is, however, a cornerstone of rebuilding a democratic and productive Polish society.

It is inside the working-class movement

that gave birth to Solidarity that the real future of Poland is now being fought over. The Western bankers and economists would love to see the old *nomenklatura* join with advocates of free enterprise inside that movement to kill the old Solidarity—while it still slumbers. Ignoring this internal reality is as dangerous to the American left as ignoring the disaster of the Stalinist movements themselves in the Eastern bloc and the Third World—a mistake the American left is still paying for.

Stephen F. Diamond
SSRC MacArthur Fellow in
International Peace and Security
Cambridge, Mass.

Unfair brush

I WAS DEEPLY OFFENDED BY A RECENT "IN SHORT" item where Luis Camnitzer is reported to have painted SUNY College of Old Westbury President Eudora Pettigrew with the Jesse Helms brush for opposing a blatantly sexist and demeaning invitation by artist Alfredo Garzon.

Despite the gains of feminism, American culture still degrades women at every turn—from economic discrimination to the law, from the arts to the military. To deride Pettigrew for opposing sexism so another male artist can promote the patriarchy is outrageous. If Pettigrew can be likened to Jesse Helms for her action, then Garzon can be likened to misogynist Larry Flynt for his.

The patriarchy censors feminism everywhere. It is the most important hidden movement in this country and manages to accomplish change while confronting the sexist educational system, sexist media and culture, sexist intellectuals, sexist religious institutions, sexist government, etc. Feminists are not the censors in this country. A casual look around will confirm that.

Shelley Bain
Des Moines, Iowa

Ludicrous mission

I THINK THE GIST OF YOUR "IN SHORT" ITEM (ITT, Nov. 15) about "Boy with Arms Akimbo"—the San Francisco Group that has plastered explicit pictures around San Francisco on cheap, grainy xeroxes as a form of guerrilla protest against the growth of anti-obscenity hysteria—is a nasty lie. I think you should substantiate the claims made (that Boy with Arms Akimbo is "most concerned with protecting, and promoting, photographs of sexually aroused pre-pubescent boys") or retract the article and apologize. I called some of the originators of the group, and they claim that no one from *In These Times* ever tried to contact them about their

actions. They also deny all of the charges made in the article. They seemed a little confused about the article and not nearly as disgusted as I am. Your readers should know that most of the people involved with Boy with Arms Akimbo are gay men. Perhaps this has a bearing on the vindictive tone of the story. Attentive readers who know nothing about the group may have been alerted anyway by the ludicrous claim that someone could make "political hay" by promoting pederasty, either in New Haven or in San Francisco.

I continue to be suspicious of a paper that seldom, if ever, has anyone writing in to complain about Alexander Cockburn, your best writer.

Aidan Wylde
San Francisco

Joel Bleifuss replies: Wylde is right. I was misinformed. Boy with Arms Akimbo are cultural guerrillas, not publicity-minded pederasts. More on the Boy in our next issue.

Unreal

YOUR SNEERING, MEAN-SPIRITED COVERAGE OF the David Dinkins mayoral victory in New York City (ITT, Nov. 15) is embarrassing and shameful. Never have I seen a better illustration of how far so-called socialists live from reality.

Michael Powell's analysis of the election reminds me of a friend who wished to register a protest against the Democratic Party machine—and voted for the Socialist Worker's Party candidate. She knew neither his name nor his politics. Her vote did indeed count—for Rudolph Giuliani.

Nowhere in your coverage is it acknowledged that progressives are substantially better served by Dinkins rather than a Giuliani victory. Nowhere does Powell credit the clear-thinking, hardworking progressives like Ruth Messinger who made the victory possible.

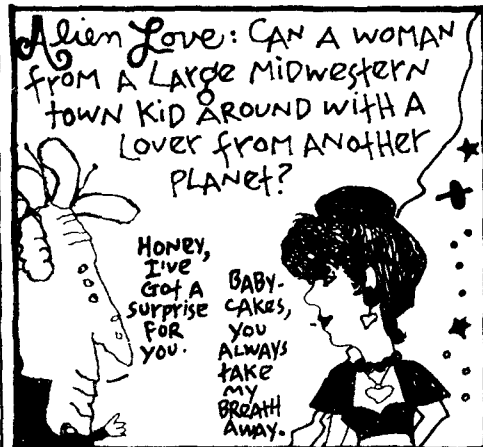
Just to be clear, it was not the San Francisco earthquake that has allowed David Dinkins to make history. (I have personally heard Giuliani whimper the same excuse.) It was the tremendous grass-roots effort made by those who got out the vote, worked on voter registration for the last year and educated the public tirelessly.

Fortunately, few people who live in the real world continue to read *In These Times*. You can all go back to your internal dialogue now and leave us to the business of trying to improve life in New York City.

You will cancel my subscription immediately. And you can try to answer this question for yourselves, because most of us already know the answer: which side are you on?

Shelley Herochik
Highland Park, N.J.

SYLVIA



By Patti McSherry

TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE WORLD WAS shocked by the massacre of six Jesuit priests and two women in El Salvador, an attack against Guatemala's religious community occurred—and caused barely a ripple of press interest here. While not at the level of barbarity of the massacre, this attack was another escalation in the spiraling wave of violence that has engulfed Guatemala since a faction of its army attempted another coup in May 1989. Student leaders and human-rights workers have also been targets for disappearance, torture and murder in recent months. This time, it was a U.S. nun, Sister Diana Ortiz, who was abducted and tortured before escaping from one of her captors.

On November 2, Sister Diana, of the Ursuline Order, was praying in the garden of the Belen Retreat House in Antigua, where she was participating in a course. The following account is taken from her written testimony.

"She was alone 10 minutes reading the Bible when a man put his hand on her shoulder and said: 'Hola mi amor' [Hello my love].... He was the same man that had accosted her in Guatemala City [some months previously, this unknown man had approached her and warned her to leave the country].... Then another unknown man appeared. The first insisted that she had to accompany him.... They showed her a pistol and said they would harm her friends if she didn't go with them."

Eventually, traveling by foot and bus, they came to a house with a white police car parked in front. Inside was a uniformed policeman. They put her into the car and blindfolded her.

"The policeman said to the men, 'I see that your trip was successful.' After a trip of approximately one half-hour, they stopped and took her inside a place that seemed like a warehouse because there was a lot of echo. They went downstairs, where she heard screams of a woman in a great deal of pain and moans of men. They put her in a dark and very cold room that had a chair and a desk. They left her there for many hours. Then three men entered: the policeman, the men who had kidnapped her from the garden. They told her that they had business to take care of and that they were

Nun's torture in Guatemala shows spiraling violence

going to explain the rules of the game to her; they were going to ask her some questions ... if they didn't like the answer, they would burn her back with a cigarette.

"They removed her sweat shirt and the policeman began to abuse her sexually. But then the man who accosted her in

As religious protest in the U.S. and Central America has mounted over military atrocities in El Salvador and Guatemala, a crackdown is taking place against religious leaders in both countries.

Guatemala said, 'Let's take care of business first, and then we'll have fun.' They removed her blindfold and showed her some pictures. One was of her in the plaza of San Miguel Acatan and in the village of Yalaj. Both were during fiesta days. She recalled that those were two occasions when the military were present. They kept burning her for every answer she gave. [According to Sister Diana's U.S. doctor, who examined her in the States, she received 111 burns on her back.]

"...One of them blindfolded her again. One man hit her so hard in the face she fell to the floor, receiving lesions on the left side of her face. They pulled her up to a sitting position on the floor and began to abuse her sexually, in several ways, but not in actual rape, because at that moment a fourth man entered the room.

"Someone said, 'Alejandro, come have some fun.' But he answered them with an obscene word common in English among North Americans. He said, 'Idiots, she is a North American. Let her alone. It's already on the news on television.' The fourth person approached her and helped her replace her T-shirt and sweatshirt. He removed her

blindfold and said, 'Let's get out of here.'

"...During the trip Diana spoke in English and he answered in Spanish, but with a non-Guatemalan accent. He asked her to pardon them because they had confused her with someone else and that they had tried to prevent this with the anonymous letters and that she hadn't taken them seriously. She replied that she had stayed because of her commitment to a suffering people. He said they had something in common. That is, he also was concerned about the people and consequently was working to liberate them from communism. She said it wasn't the same because they didn't respect human life. The man told her that they were going to talk with a friend from the North American embassy who could help her."

At this point Sister Diana realized they were in a zone of the capital; she opened the door, ran out and made her way to the Maryknoll Center House. From there, she was moved to the safety of the papal nuncio of Guatemala. The U.S. ambassador visited her, but she would not discuss the incident with him. She left the country soon after.

Church under attack: Two nuns who worked with Sister Diana came to Washington, D.C., recently to meet with members of Congress, the media and human-rights and religious organizations about the crime. NISGUA, the Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala, is demanding that Congress call for an investigation.

Monsignor Prospero Penados, the archbishop of Guatemala, stated: "This attack cannot be seen but as a direct attack on the Catholic Church." He also announced that a Maryknoll sister, Sister Patricia Denny, had recently left the country after her house was broken into by unidentified men and she received repeated death threats. The archbishop said that these were actions intended "to force the Catholic Church to be silent and impede its denunciation of the crimes that occur in Guatemala." Recently, four other nuns left the country after death threats.

On November 10, Guatemala's newspaper *Prensa Libre* reported that President Vinicio Cerezo expressed doubt as to whether the attack against Sister Diana had occurred at

all. Cerezo added that one could not say that a violation of human rights had taken place, since this was an act perpetrated by extragovernmental groups outside the control of the authorities. It was not clear how Cerezo reconciled his two apparently contradictory statements.

Terrorist attacks against religious workers are not a new phenomenon in Guatemala. Since the early '80s, 17 priests and thousands of church laypersons have been murdered in the military's bloody counterinsurgency campaigns. Under the military's national-security ideology, the religious community is suspect because of its championship of the rights of the poor. The generals and the extreme right still hold the reins of power in Guatemala, behind the increasingly discredited shell of civilian government under Cerezo.

As religious protest both in Central America and the U.S. has mounted over military atrocities in El Salvador and Guatemala, a concerted crackdown is taking place against religious leaders in both countries—with apparent backing by the Bush administration. The recent arrest in El Salvador of Jennifer Casolo, a representative of the Christian Education Seminars, after an arms cache was allegedly discovered in her house, was carried out with the support and assistance of the American Embassy. There are reports now that U.S. Justice Department officials and FBI representatives are considering charges against her under the little-used Neutrality Act—legislation not applied to U.S. mercenaries fighting with or assisting the contras. Americas Watch and some representatives of Congress have sharply criticized U.S. government officials for presuming Casolo's guilt.

Administration complicity: A spokeswoman from the State Department told me on November 20 that no protest had been filed by the U.S. regarding Sister Diana's abduction and torture because the case fell under Guatemalan jurisdiction. The Guatemalan authorities were responsible for the investigation, and the police were investigating. Such pronouncements of respect for Guatemalan jurisdiction provide a convenient justification for official U.S. silence: a silence that signals tacit acceptance of acts of terrorism, while shadowy death squads provide a convenient fiction to mask accountability.

Patti McSherry is a graduate student in political science who is also active in the human-rights field.

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How I Spent My Thanksgiving Vacation

I spent a bit of Thanksgiving weekend, late in November, at Camp Solidarity, set up next to the Clinch River near the town of Lebanon in southwestern Virginia by miners striking the Pittston Coal Group. This was about the time that President Bush, warming up for the Malta summit, was boosting Western values of free speech and democracy. The Polish labor leader Lech Walesa had just been given an exuberant greeting by the president and Congress.

About 1,900 members of the United Mine Workers (UMW) have been on strike against Pittston since April 5, having worked without a contract for several months prior to that. The rest of the companies in the Bituminous Coal Operators' Association had signed this same contract, but Pittston, run by Paul Douglas, son of a famous U.S. politician of an earlier era, is clearly out to break the union. Pittston is trying to take back health benefits, retiree's health cards, overtime and vacation benefits. The company has tried to insist that it isn't, but miners don't decide to live on strike pay for eight months for frivolous reasons.

At first the strike got some coverage, but then—as I described here a couple of months ago—the national press mostly lost interest. Network crews and newsmen spent enormous sums to cover Soviet miners on strike, but five hours from Washington D.C., American miners waited vainly for the big guns of the press to show.

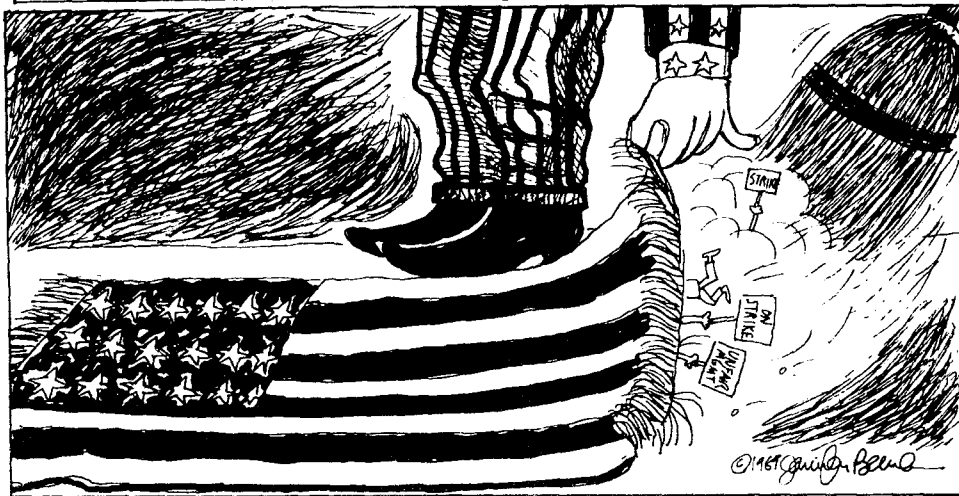
It wasn't as though there was a shortage of dramatic incidents. At about 4 p.m. on September 17, two U-haul trucks drove up the road to Pittston's Moss No. 3 coal-preparation plant and disgorged 98 striking miners who promptly occupied the plant. It was a tense situation. The governor of Virginia, Gerald Bailes, sent increasing numbers of state police into the area. By 7 p.m. on September 20, 75 hours into the occupation, a U.S. district judge had ordered the miners to vacate the plant and 5,000 supporters were ringed around Moss No. 3. At 9 p.m. the occupiers marched out and melted into the crowd. For nearly four days Pittston's operations in Southwest Virginia had been at a standstill.

Such scenes in the Soviet Union or Poland sent network executives scurrying to book costly satellite time to relay back the dramatic pictures. It was the first occupation of this sort in the U.S. since 1937, but none the less one ignored by ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN and Headline News. AP and UPI carried nothing on their national wires for two days. Nothing ran in the major papers till the *Washington Post* picked up an AP story on September 19. The *Wall Street Journal* opened its coverage with three sentences in a story a day later. A couple of weeks before I got to Camp Solidarity, Jackie Stump, district president for the Mineworkers in that region, had won a victory that once again offered an opportunity for dramatic coverage by a press hoarse with reporting revolt from below in Eastern Europe.

Prior to the election on November 7, the local member of Virginia's House of Delegates had been Donald McGlothlin Sr., a 20-year veteran of the statehouse and father of circuit court judge Donald McGlothlin Jr., who had fined the union \$30 million for

ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn



strike activities. The miners thought that McGlothlin Sr. should have been doing more than announcing his neutrality in the dispute. Three weeks before the election, Stump announced he would run as a write-in candidate. He won by a 2-to-1 margin. When a Klansman triumphed in a race for the Louisiana statehouse, the press rushed to New Orleans. But Stump's write-in victory, virtually unprecedented in U.S. political history, drew scant attention.

In the canteen of Camp Solidarity, a stoutly built and well-armed structure raised by miners on land owned by a UMW member, I talked to James Hicks, president of the union local 1259. Hicks, a 42-year-old Vietnam veteran, said about 50,000 supporters of the miners had stopped off at the camp at various times since it was set up in midsummer. He'd been interviewed by journalists from Australia, the Soviet Union and Europe and was having a hard time trying to figure out why U.S. miners on strike for eight months had become virtually off-limits to the national press and TV networks.

Later I drove a few miles to a motel near the town of Coeburn (which sports signs saying it's Virginia's tidiest town, I was pleased to note) and next morning picked up the Sunday edition of the *Washington Post*, which carried a story about the strike and not a single quote from any striking miner.

The *Post*, like most U.S. newspapers, has time for strikers so long as they are on the far side of what used to be called the Iron Curtain.

I headed up toward Philadelphia, next stop on a tour I've been making to promote a book I've just co-authored about the Amazon. The newspapers and TV screens were filled with images of ecstatic East Berliners shopping in the West, also of Czechs mustered to face down their masters. The airwaves and opinion columns were flush with paeans to the victory of Western values while simultaneously covering the six Jesuits murdered by U.S.-supplied Salvadoran government soldiers who were rewarded for their barbarous slayings by fresh infusions of cash from the U.S. government.

As with the miners' strike, you'd think from the networks and from newspapers like the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Wall Street Journal* that national reaction to the slaying of the Jesuits had been in line with White House support for the d'Aubuisson regime nominally headed by Alfredo Cristiani. But outside the beltways surrounding New York and Washington's media barons, the sentiment is markedly different.

I traveled from Philadelphia to Boston to Madison, Wis., to the twin cities of Minneapolis-St. Paul. The *Philadelphia Inquirer's* lead editorial for November 27 called U.S. policy toward El Salvador "a duplicitous charade" and said that if one looked back at slain Archbishop Oscar Romero's advice to Jimmy Carter nine years ago not to intervene with U.S. aid, it is difficult to conceive that El Salvador would be worse off today if Washington had heeded the archbishop's advice. A *Boston Globe* editorial for December 1 concluded that "the best approach for the U.S. is to get out [of El Salvador] unilaterally, without trying to mastermind the war."

Madison's *Capital Times* had already determined in an editorial for November 18 that though the Bush administration was speeding up military aid to the government, "the dead priests had a better idea: forge a government that includes the rebels instead of continuing a war that brings only more and more death."

The St. Paul *Pioneer Press Dispatch's* lead editorial for November 29 said the failure of the Reagan-Bush policy had become "painfully evident."

What about popular reaction here to U.S. policy in El Salvador? You wouldn't know it from the networks that sent teams prowling the backstreets of Leipzig in search of dissent, but between November 13 and December 1, the organization National Pledge of Resistance tallied 195 demonstrations, including occupations, blockades of federal buildings and, in the case of Seattle, blockading of Interstate 5 by protesters.

The Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES) counts 400 protests since November 11 and reckons it's

the largest such wave opposing U.S. policy since the Vietnam War. The day I arrived in Minneapolis, a committee of the city council was considering a motion—reckoned virtually certain of passage by the council and approval by Mayor Don Fraser—barring the city of Minneapolis from retaining the powerful law firm of O'Connor & Hannan for any new services until it is no longer employed by Cristiani, ARENA or "any other entity involved in the repression of El Salvador." This law firm, founded in Minneapolis and with branches in Denver and Washington, D.C., has registered as an agent under retainer for Cristiani.

Under TV lights in the crowded city council chamber, some witnesses recounted to council members the atrocities wrought by the ARENA government. Legal witnesses rejected O'Connor & Hannan's defense that it was merely fulfilling the duty of providing a client proper legal representation. Indeed, it seems that O'Connor & Hannan have been lobbyists, among many such services, choreographing a Cristiani visit to Washington. O'Connor & Hannan partner Joseph Blatchford, who handles the Cristiani account, drafted an op-ed column for the *New York Times* that appeared under Cristiani's name.

As the testimony wound down in the council chamber, council member Walt Dziedzic intervened. In the past, Dziedzic said, he'd been opposed to council interventions into the realm of foreign policy. He'd been a policeman who had grown up in working-class northeast Minneapolis. He remembered the work there of nuns like the church women murdered by a Salvadoran right-wing death squad. "Now," said Dziedzic to a hushed chamber, "I've gone full-circle from cop to protester. I'm not proud of myself for sitting silent on El Salvador. I sat silent till the Jesuits were murdered, and I'm not going to sit silent any more."

Amid cheers, Dziedzic said he supported the motion to break city ties with O'Connor & Hannan until the firm gave up working for Cristiani. Listening to Dziedzic, I felt the same way as I had after talking to Hicks back in Virginia. Here were a vet and a cop, part of the vast spectrum of voices mostly caricatured as "the silent majority," who want justice of a kind unappetizing to Bush and the clique of press people around him who chirped about democratic values in Malta while blind to the realities of southwest Virginia and El Salvador.

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Ugly American policy and the myth of 'magic man' Lansdale

Edward Lansdale: The Unquiet American

By Cecil B. Currey
Houghton Mifflin, 448 pp., \$24.95

By John Stevenson

IN HIS DAY, EDWARD GEARY LANSDALE was the most famous of America's post-World War II secret operatives abroad, and he remains the most legendary. Credited with saving the Philippines from communist insurgency in the late '40s and early '50s, he moved on to Vietnam in the turmoil of French defeat, where he served as inspiration for fictional portrayals in two best-sellers of the time. Lansdale was likened to James Bond by President Kennedy (whose passion for Ian Fleming's thrillers helped make them so popular). And Lansdale was compared by the press to Lawrence of Arabia and hailed as a miracle worker.

Somehow, though, his magic didn't work in Vietnam, and the miracle man was eventually returned to Washington to direct various schemes designed to unseat Castro. Failing there as well, Lansdale spent most of his remaining years trying to compensate for his failures and increasing distance from power. He artfully built up his image as a maverick operator who knew how to successfully fight guerrilla wars but was prevented from doing so by self-serving military chieftains and bureaucrats. The legend has had its believers, including men with such now-familiar names as John Singlaub and Oliver North (who is said to have seen himself as the Lansdale of the '80s).

Buying the myth: Unfortunately, the legend has also been bought by Cecil B. Currey, author of *Edward*

Lansdale: The Unquiet American. There is here a fair amount of information faithfully compiled, but Currey's determination to lionize Lansdale produces a plodding, uninteresting biography.

Currey, a professor of military history at the University of South Florida, interviewed Lansdale extensively before the latter's 1987 death.

BIOGRAPHY

Currey sometimes disputes Lansdale's version of events, but mostly he buys into the self-portrayal of the person he characterizes at one point as "this gray, unassuming man with the Mount Rushmore head," who "may have held the keys to American success [in Vietnam] in his hands and yet no one listened."

Currey is obviously incapable of bringing out the significance of Lansdale as a figure embodying some of the ironies, illusions and pretensions of America's post-war attempts to dominate the Third World—a man who could be a lightning rod for the admiration of cold warriors from JFK to Ollie North as well as the satire of Graham Greene.

Lansdale is widely believed to be the model for Alden Pyle, the "Quiet American" in Greene's novel of the same name, an earnest and boyish good liberal with "soft dog's eyes" whose innocence and idealistic but ignorant meddling causes others to suffer and himself, finally, to die in the war of the Viet Minh against the French. Greene says the Pyle figure was *not* based on Lansdale. Indeed, the character seems mainly to represent Greene's view of Americans and their post-war role in the world, although some aspects of the person and behavior of Lansdale (whose stay in Vietnam overlapped with

Greene's stint as a reporter there) were used in the portrait.

Ugly Americans: This is not true of the equivalent character in *The Ugly American*, the 1958 homily by William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick, a series of tales revolving around the fictional southeast Asian country of Sarkhan. Here the Lansdale figure is Edwin B. Hillandale—"The Ragtime Kid," a six-foot red-headed harmonica-playing fortune-telling U.S. Air Force colonel. He loved to eat, drink and be merry with the local people, learning their language and customs and using that knowledge and his own gregariousness to fight communism in Asia. Several details make clear that Lansdale is the model for Hillandale, whom the authors note (in a "factual epilogue" to their book) is one of the characters who are "based on actual Americans known to the authors."

Another persistent confusion, though, did dog public discussion of *The Ugly American*. Since most of the bestseller portrayed the boorish behavior of American officials abroad, the title became widely used as a tag for them or other U.S. yahoos. But the novel's "ugly American" is simply a physically ugly engineer who bucks the bureaucrats to invent a cheap and simple water pump for the peasant villagers of Sarkhan—one of Lederer and Burdick's heroes, like Lansdale. These two exemplified the novel's message: if Americans working for their country overseas could just eschew luxuries, learn the local language and mix with the common people (who would see what friendly and unaffected folks we Americans really are) then the rising tide of communism could be reversed.

Yet the popular misconception about the book's title was actually a

profound transposition. For what Lansdale was doing was actually pretty ugly.

He went to the Philippines in 1950 with a secret agency later absorbed into the CIA (the Office of Policy Coordination, an organization that became the Agency's "department of dirty tricks", but whose previous existence was not known outside intelligence circles for decades and not included in the official CIA history until 1982).

Lansdale's task was to oversee the performance of Ramon Magsaysay, a young Philippine congressman the U.S. had chosen to take over the campaign against Hukbalahap guerrilla insurgents ("the Huks," for short), then at its height. At American insistence, Magsaysay was appointed Philippine secretary of defense. In the Philippines, Lansdale was his roommate and remained at his side throughout the day, overseeing every aspect of the anti-Huk campaign. Under Lansdale's watchful eye, the army was "reformed" (and also doubled in size). One of these reforms was offering rewards for dead Huks or information leading to their capture.

Ghoulis huckster: Lansdale's specialty, though, was what he called "psywar": tricks designed to demoralize or incapacitate the enemy. Light planes would fly over suspected Huk territory broadcasting curses in Tagalog (the main Philippine language) against any who helped the rebels, or troops would sneak into villages at night to paint large eyes on houses to give peasants and Huks (often identical) the idea that "the eye of God" was upon them.

A favorite tactic of Lansdale's was to spread rumors about a vampire and then kill a captured Huk by means of two punctures in the throat, draining his blood out and leaving the bloodless corpse for villagers to find. Another favored device was to tape a Huk sympathizer's confession, kill the man and then broadcast the tape from near his grave after his burial by fellow villagers (who were then supposed to believe that the dead man's ghost was warning them).

Such exploits give a measure of the man. A former advertising whiz kid, Lansdale believed that masses of people could be manipulated easily by a clever operator—especially when they were Asian peasants, for whom the contempt expressed by his actions is equaled only by the cavalier brutality of his methods.

The counterpoint to such terror tactics was Magsaysay's offer to give land to Huks who surrendered. In practice, out of the 9,500 Huks who gave themselves up, only about 200 were actually settled on such homesteads. But the pledge—the image—was what counted for people like Lansdale.

By 1954 the Hukbalahap had been

pretty well defeated—a result chiefly of divisions, lack of flexibility and other problems and errors within their own ranks. As befits an advertising man, Lansdale was an artful self-promoter as well, and many afterward accepted his own estimation that the Huks had been vanquished through his intrigues.

With American promotion, financing and supervision, Magsaysay was meanwhile catapulted to the Philippine presidency. Lansdale went on to Vietnam to attempt a repeat of his supposed Philippine magic—first through dirty tricks directed against Ho Chi Minh's forces in the wake of the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu, and then by grooming Ngo Dinh Diem, the Western-sponsored premier of South Vietnam, to be another Magsaysay.

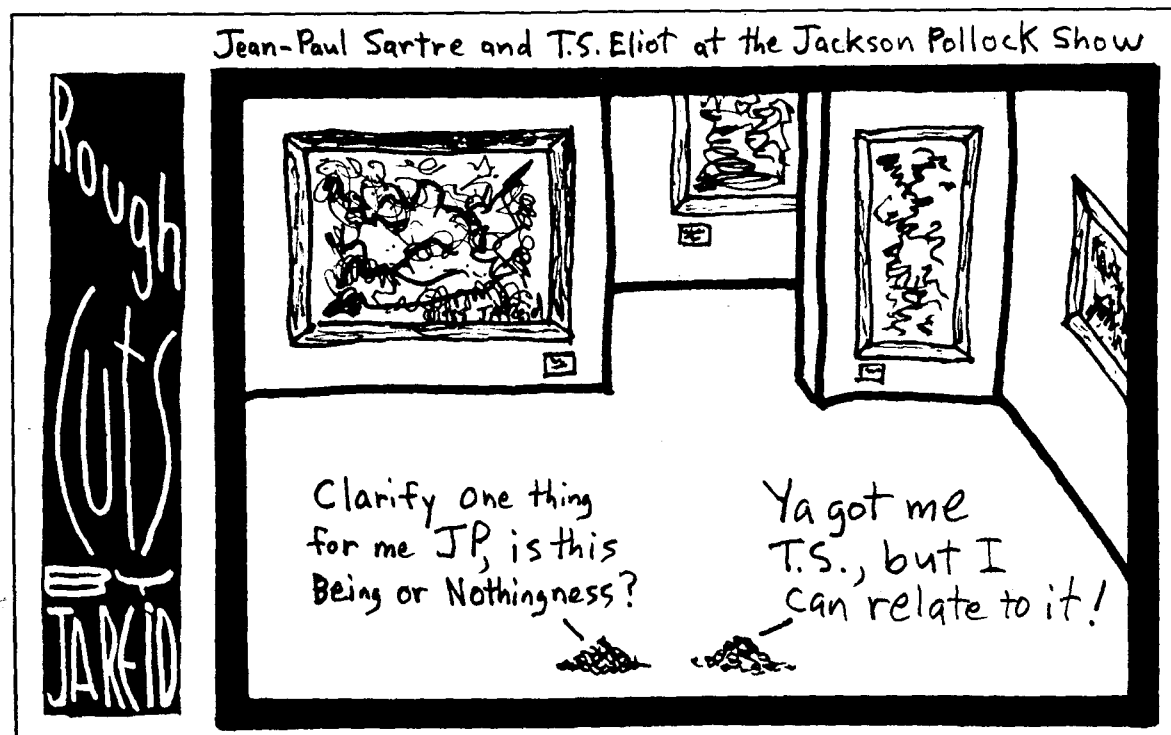
In neither task, as history records, was Lansdale very successful, and after three years he returned to Washington, where he later directed Operation Mongoose—a potpourri of various plots to bring down the Castro regime in the wake of the humiliating American defeat in the Bay of Pigs invasion.

One of Lansdale's own ideas is said to have been that of spreading rumors in Cuba that the Second Coming of Christ was at hand. On the night foretold, an American submarine would shoot star shells, illuminating the skies, while the rumor was spread that Castro was preventing Christ's return to Cuba! Although he later denied floating such a proposal, it bears the genuine Lansdale touch—its manipulative contempt of common peasants matched only by a contemptible inability to come to grips with the dynamics of Third World revolutionary change.

Currey is fond of sprinkling his text with Lansdale quotes—gems like, "It's not enough to be *against* communism; you have to be *for* something." One of these, though, is actually rather profound. "Our job," Lansdale is quoted as saying during his second stint in Vietnam, "is how to be revolutionaries without tearing up the social fabric."

Indeed, the problem for the U.S. was precisely how to deal with the revolutionary aspirations and necessities of peasants oppressed by landlords, local governments and foreign invaders without actually changing any of the social relations that kept them in bondage. The "Lansdale line," in particular, called for purveying an image of transformation without its reality—being "revolutionary" without "tearing up the social fabric." Unfortunately for the Lansdales of the world—but fortunately for most of the rest of us—such image-manipulation cannot finally stem the forces of social and historical change. ■

John Stevenson is a Chicago-area writer whose work has appeared in the *Village Voice*, *The Nation* and other periodicals.



The Ambition and the Power
—the Fall of Jim Wright:
A True Story of Washington
By John M. Barry
Viking, 768 pp., \$22.95

By Jonathan Silvers

IT IS A CREDIT TO JOHN M. BARRY'S journalistic instinct that the story behind *The Ambition and the Power* is as intriguing as its subject. In December 1986, Barry, former political editor of *Dun's Business Week*, informed Congressman Jim Wright that he intended to chronicle his forthcoming tenure as speaker of the House of Representatives, and in the process draw some conclusions about the proverbial Washington power game. Writes Barry, "It became immediately apparent that [Wright's] concept of the speakership was radically different from that of his recent predecessors. It seemed to me that his efforts to push his own view of the world on Washington, and to reorder the balance of power there, would make a perfect vehicle for a book on how power is exercised."

Though anticipating a perfunctory refusal (Congress members each dismiss an average of 200 media requests daily), Barry nonetheless asked for Wright's cooperation on the project. He also asked for access to all meetings, parties and debates routinely denied outsiders—informal activities where much of congressional decisionmaking takes place. "My appeal was to his sense of history," writes Barry. "I made clear he would have no financial stake in the book, no editorial control over it, and would not even get to read the manuscript prior to publication."

The hostile essence: Over his advisers' objections, and to the astonishment of the capital press corps, Wright agreed, offering Barry virtually unrestricted access to himself, his materials and his staff for the next two years. Several members of the Democratic leadership—and a few ranking members of the Republican opposition—followed the speaker's example, inviting Barry to private, often-hostile exchanges on the very essence of political power.

It is Barry's good fortune that what threatened to become another standardized profile of a politician and the institution he oversees became something entirely different. Eighteen months into his term as speaker, Wright was besieged with rumors of misconduct and financial impropriety. As the rumors gained credibility, becoming by turns allegations and then formal charges deliberated by the House ethics committee, Wright's position became increasingly tenuous—and Barry's correspondingly enviable. With his privileges intact, Barry was able to observe firsthand the decline of one of the country's most skilled congressmen.

The emphasis should be on the word "skilled." Because in spite of his ignominious end, it is Wright's

effectiveness that dominates Barry's narrative, just as for 17 terms it dominated Congress: "In essence, Wright wanted to govern the country from the House. That required over-awing the Senate and confronting and defeating the White House. Such ambition soared so high as to seem almost laughable. And yet he intended to succeed, by transforming the House into a disciplined weapon, a phalanx that he could hurl at his enemies. To do that, he had to change the way the House had operated for three-quarters of a century."

Charm and pressure: He succeeded, Barry argues, first by earning the confidence of his colleagues, later by mastering the byzantine rules of Congress. A dynamic orator, possessed of tremendous charisma and a ready if somewhat satanic grin, Wright tactically voiced the concerns of less-voluble members when they were unable to do so, a favor they returned with votes and timely alliances.

Where his native Texas charm failed, Wright was not above applying a little less-than-gentle pressure to colleagues who failed to see his point. By the spring of 1988, following a giddy ascent through the House hierarchy, Wright had seized control of the legislative agenda and had his eye on policy areas historically—and statutorily—outside congressional authority.

His ambition was not unfounded; even Wright's detractors grudgingly admitted he got results. The record

of the 100th Congress, the first over which Wright presided, was nothing short of remarkable: a \$90 million highway appropriation bill; a \$20 billion clean-water bill; catastrophic health insurance; welfare reform; and a half-dozen other liberal measures that had long been clogging

POLITICS

the legislative pipelines. Even in foreign policy making, which the Constitution reserves as a presidential prerogative, Wright's influence was significant: "Central American governments trusted and confided in Wright more than in any member of the [Reagan] administration; proper or not, he had at least as much influence in Central America as the White House."

Still, while Wright's official achievements were admirable, his personal goals were less so. In public or on the House floor, he appeared

Jim Wright succeeded by earning the confidence of colleagues and mastering the byzantine rules of Congress.

rigidly self-controlled. But by his own admission he concealed his aspirations and insecurity beneath a calculatedly upbeat exterior. "How could they know him?" questioned Barry. "The mask. All politicians wear masks, but Wright never took it off. In his own journal he described himself as 'secretive.'"

Getting to greed: His biggest secret, his biggest weakness, was money. For all his years in Congress, for all his power, Wright's financial status was meager. And he resented it: "The career was not what he had dreamed of.... Didn't Betty deserve a little comfort? Didn't the kids deserve something? His net worth, \$129,000 when he entered Congress at age 31, fell to \$68,000 at age 53. Inflation shrank that figure by half again." Encouraged by friends and contributors, he invested in or lent his name (for a consideration) to dubious publishing and real-estate ventures, and grew increasingly agile (i.e., imprudent) with his war-chest.

"When I started out as a young man I was a real purist," he told a reporter with the *Dallas Times Herald*. "I took no contribution of more than \$100 and nothing from people affected by legislation. But, hell, after a while you see everyone is affected one way or another.... My position now is if the law says it's all right, I'll take the money."

In time the House rules tightened, and by the spring of 1989 Wright found himself in an unusual position:

at a loss for words, incapable of explaining—or rationalizing—his business affairs, several of which appeared particularly compromising. With the allegations mounting and the national press clamoring for his head, Wright made what may have been the most straightforward statement of his career: "We were just greedy. Damn it." That greed would ultimately result in 69 charges of ethics violations and his resignation.

The Ambition and the Power is a definitive, painstakingly rendered account of Jim Wright's downfall. It is also a luminous analysis of congressional jurisdiction and the political mechanisms that substitute for good government. Barry is especially effective at unveiling the enmity and prejudice that accompany so many power plays, and at painting accurate if unflattering portraits of the players. Georgia Republican Newt Gingrich, to cite one example, is presented as nemesis, the driving force behind a scurrilous two-year media campaign to discredit the Democratic Party.

Insightful as it is, Barry's prose is often ponderous, rife with italicized asides and literary allusions that attempt to but don't quite pass for the New Journalism. ("This thing was playing out exactly the way everyone had warned Wright it would. What was he going to do about it?") Nevertheless, *The Ambition and the Power* succeeds largely because of its proximity to power and John Barry's ability to discover what for most voters have been elusive truths.

Jonathan Silvers is completing a book on presidential politics. *The Faking of the President*, co-authored with the late Abbie Hoffman, will be published by Viking next spring.



A tale of ends and means in the house that Wright built

By Dennis Perrin

O'Donoghue's edgy humor is edged out of the mainstream

MICHAEL O'DONOGHUE is well known within the comedy-writing community. His work for *National Lampoon* (the early, literate version of the magazine) and *Saturday Night Live* fixed O'Donoghue's notable reputation as one whose wit dripped with the blood of beaten taboos. Larger audiences may remember him as the bearded Mr. Mike, *Saturday Night*'s evil storyteller who read brutal tales like "The Little Train That Died," where the Little Train suffers a heart attack while trying to climb a sharp incline. Woody Allen fans might recognize

COMEDY

O'Donoghue from *Manhattan*, where he played Diane Keaton's director friend who is working on a film about life-threatening orgasms.

You may get the impression that O'Donoghue is a morbid soul. A few people I know feel he creates from a fascist aesthetic, the preoccupation with violence and death serving as definitive proof. I politely dissent. Unlike most contemporary comedians, O'Donoghue doesn't seek affectionate laughter; he forgoes the humiliating ritual of begging audience acceptance. He searches instead for humorous patterns in grim reality, sometimes leaving the punchline up to you.

I recently met with O'Donoghue in New York. Our conversation turned to corporate influence on expression, the Sony-Columbia merger being fresh on our minds. I mentioned the widespread reluctance of comedians to attack these dominating structures, citing the occupational hazards involved. (Who, for instance, on HBO's Comedy Channel would risk a cutting routine about that network being part of mighty Time-Warner?) O'Donoghue said that there is less of a marketplace for his work. "Television is essentially closed to me now," he admits.

"Here's a joke you're not going to hear on NBC," declares O'Donoghue, leaning forward as if in confidence: "G.E.: We bring good things to life, and then we kill them." He then unfolds a sheet of paper. "I did a bunch of corporate ads for *Saturday Night Live* and was told specifically to take them off the air. A true act of corporate censorship. I'll give you an example of material that NBC specifically told me to stop." A mellow announcer's voice takes over. "The following program is made possible by a grant from Exxaco. Exxaco: We're changing the way America cuts its throat."

O'Donoghue reads down the list: "Exxaco: Selling your future so we can live like pigs today." "Exxaco: Give us your money or we'll destroy your planet." "Exxaco: We got Karen Silkwood, and we'll get the son of a

bitch who wrote this."

Silverman's bunker: The same year O'Donoghue tried to place this material on the air, 1981, he assembled two other strong pieces. One, the now infamous "Last Ten Days of Silverman's Bunker," portrayed NBC as Nazi Germany and programming mastermind Fred Silverman as Hitler. This was squelched by NBC. The second idea was a touch more disturbing.

"I did a thing called 'The Good Excuse,'" O'Donoghue remembers, "which was a blazing attack on anti-Semitism. It's a hard thing to attack because everyone attacks it in the same pedestrian way. Holocaust movies don't stir up what that time was like; it's just another old tired image that doesn't affect me. Just as I did the 'Vietnamese Baby Book' at the *National Lampoon* to revitalize anger about the Vietnam War, I did this sketch.

"Here's how the piece worked. We began with stock footage of concentration camps and the GIs coming in and being shocked at these gaunt

skeletal creatures standing behind barbed wire. We dissolve to the office of the commandant, and he's furiously burning files trying to get rid of evidence. A GI comes in, throws him against the wall, puts a bayonet to his throat and says, 'Before I blow your Hun ass all over the wall, I just want to know one thing: What could have driven a human being to the things you have done?' And the commandant says, 'I guess there's no harm in telling you. We had a good excuse! Do you mind if I whisper it in your ear?' So he whispers two or three words to the GI, and the GI says, 'Geez, I am sorry. I had no idea! When I saw that hundred-foot mound of human skulls outside your office, you can imagine how I jumped to the wrong conclusion!'

"The sketch was framed in a thing called 'Scripts-The-Dog-Ate-The-Ending-To Playhouse.' There is no ending to the script. The point was, obviously, there was no good excuse, there couldn't be a good excuse, and the very fact of saying

there was a good excuse is how ludicrous it could be. NBC didn't see that. They saw it as an anti-Semitic piece. Here was their point: Yes, an intelligent person would understand this was an attack on racial bigotry. But an unintelligent person would think it promoted racial bigotry. I said I was writing for intelligent people. It was a shame."

There's no substructure of cohesive intellectual ideas in today's comedy.

O'Donoghue's flair for rattling cultural bureaucrats was not confined to television. After leaving the original *Saturday Night Live*, O'Donoghue took his ideas to Hollywood. One treatment titled *War of the Insect Gods* evidently appalled a Universal Pictures executive who, according to

O'Donoghue, seemed on the verge of throwing him out of his office. Still, he remains upbeat about the project. "War of the Insect Gods has a happy ending in that the insects triumph over man," O'Donoghue explained.

"The insects take on a divine concept: you actually see a nativity roach, a nativity Christ being born as a revival of new spiritualism in the world. I doubt that Universal is going to perceive that as a happy ending, but it sure put a smile on my face."

Process and unreality: Such challenging material rarely, if ever, appears in our entertainment culture. The mainstream of comedy, continuing to haul in big money, naturally does not tinker with its profit mechanisms. As O'Donoghue views it, there's no "substructure of cohesive intellectual ideas" sustaining mass humor. "When you see a guy like Billy Crystal, who's professionally extremely good but he isn't offering much, it's just another Kraft food product being shoved down your throat whether you want to eat it or not. I once wrote, 'Have you ever noticed that after a few minutes Cup-A-Soup turns into Cup-A-Nasty-Chemicals?' I get the same feeling with today's comedy. It's sort of pre-processed."

O'Donoghue mentions another concept he submitted during his last, brief stay at *Saturday Night* in 1985. "I did a piece about Jean Seberg being brutalized by the FBI. I wanted to use comedy as the form to tell this nasty little story. I was going to show the FBI and her life and their smear campaign, and at the end I wanted to dissolve from clippings of her suicide into her footage from *Saint Joan*, sort of fragmented video footage of her burning as Joan of Arc. It could have been very emotionally moving. I just could not get that through Lorne Michaels and that particular regime. They wanted hard laughs, more of the same."

These days O'Donoghue works as a screenwriter with Mitchell Glazer (their last film, *Scrooged*, starring Bill Murray, was a disappointment for O'Donoghue). Though he gets "paid more to be brutalized" in Hollywood, O'Donoghue clearly misses the immediacy of live TV. When I think back to some of his indelible images, atomic lobsters devouring a *Saturday Night* audience, a carnivorous puppet show, Manson followers hawking human-hair pot holders, I find that I miss O'Donoghue as well.

Television needs a jolt of inventive disorder—attitudes that convert a household appliance into a fountain of surprise. It will take more than O'Donoghue to rearrange the medium, but I can conceive of no better beginning. Anyone who wonders if Shari Lewis and Lamb Chop will occupy separate graves deserves some television time. ■

Dennis Perrin is a New York area writer and broadcaster.



Desperately shrieking and losin'

She-Devil

Directed by Susan Seidelman

By Pat Aufderheide

SHE-DEVIL IS A LITTLE PIECE OF Hollywood feminism. But its humor is heavier than its protagonist, Roseanne Barr, and its fantasy is dulled with good intentions.

Director Susan Seidelman (*Desperately Seeking Susan*, *Making Mr. Right*) is by now a pro at transmitting women's issues into entertainment.

FILM

In *She-Devil*, a self-conscious fairy tale, she employs the bubble-gum-colored cartoonish production design she used in *Making Mr. Right*. With the help of scriptwriters Barry Strugatz and Mark R. Burns, the characters' depth matches the costuming and sets.

The story, drawn from Fay Weldon's novel, is Everywoman's revenge on the romance novel. Home-ly, clumsy Ruth (Barr) can't cook, and her children are louts. She does have an overstuffed suburban tract house, thanks to her good-looking accountant husband Bob (Ed Begley Jr.), who married her only because she was pregnant.

Then Bob meets Mary Fisher (Meryl Streep), a romance novelist with a pink computer, a pink castle by the sea and an indoor swimming pool you can almost see the other end of. Mary seduces Bob, and Ruth goes out for revenge. As Bob's for-



Roseanne Barr, Ed Begley Jr., Meryl Streep: between the devil and a weak movie.

tunes fall along with Mary's, Ruth's rise; she becomes the head of an employment agency for unemployable women, who become a guerrilla force for her schemes as a she-devil.

Of course, Ruth isn't just destructive. (This is a Christmas movie, after all.) Her devildom actually makes Mary a better writer, Bob a kinder person and gives Ruth the self-esteem the lack of which had made her such a clod. And maybe, just maybe, her kids won't be such spoiled brats anymore.

She-Devil has moments that delight the part of us that feels chained to domestic convenience, such as

when Ruth blows up her microwave by putting aerosol cans in it. There are media in-jokes, featuring Robin Leach and Sally Jessy Raphael as themselves. The movie's contrast of romance-novel images and the work life of the American homemaker can be pungent. It plays lavishly with transformation of character through changes of costume and design; Ruth slicks up as Mary dresses down, for instance. And it has side-themes that hold our interest, particularly the friendship between Ruth and a co-worker, Hooper (Linda Hunt), who blossoms into personhood under Ruth's well-meaning maliciousness.

Romancing the clone: So why isn't all of this more fun? Part of it is the cartoon quality of all the characters, who prance obediently through mechanical set-ups for laughs. Part of it is that most of the characters are not just paper-thin but also unpleasant. Mary is a grasping, self-deluded shrew who's mean to her mother; Bob is a corporate lech who lies to his kids; and Ruth is first pathetic and then spiteful.

Ruth has none of the salt-of-the-earth empathy of Barr's TV sitcom character Roseanne. *She-Devil* never taps the wry, savage comic energy Barr brings to *Roseanne*. The phys-

ical joke of pairing the elegant Streep with the earthy Barr doesn't carry us far enough. The atmosphere of emotional deprivation can't be cleared by anger, however righteous.

And then there's the faintly patronizing undercurrent of earnestness. Ruth is a one-woman bandwagon against the duping of the womanly myths of romance novels, and the joke's on the romance novelist on the day she finally does her own laundry. But the American woman's romance with the romance novel is meatier than is suggested by the gauze-and-chintz interiors of Mary Fisher's home. You can poke fun so flippantly only if you don't understand the pull of the ever-changing genre on women who know they'll never be tawny or capture an 18th-century cavalier.

Finally, Ruth's answer to her own problems—and to those of so many other women—threatens to shred the film's fairy-tale status altogether. All that the unemployed need, she claims, is a little understanding to boost their self-esteem and find the right job. The idea of kinder, gentler employment agencies as a solution to the problems of working women only makes you notice the holes in the movie and the ways that it falls from whimsy into old-fashioned implausibility.

It's been a tough decade for romance on the silver screen. We could all use a horse laugh at the swoony conventions that we can't measure up to, one that doesn't just leave us with a chortle of self-satisfaction. But *She-Devil*, sadly, isn't it. It lacks the gutsy vitality that might change its central character from a mere schemer to a hellion you could love.

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No Holding Back

Randy Travis

Warner Brothers Records

By Mark G. Judge

A country punk with attitude, honesty

MUSIC

Y'SEE, RANDY WAS A TROUBLE-some nipper growin' up in Tennessee, gettin' drunk (doin' drugs, too) and runnin' from the law before he met Lib. That's his manager. She took him under her wing when he was but 16, no more than a boy really, and she stuck by him all those years he was playin' in beer halls where your feet stick to the floor and two-bit honky-tonk joints in Nashville. She even left her own man for him, and Randy does feel bad about that. (I was told she has 20 years on the boy.) Anyhow, she was more persistent than a pig at the trough tryin' to get him a break, and it worked, too. He signed with some slickers at Warner Brothers, and now he's sold more than \$80 million worth of them records. Shoot. Stays out o' trouble now, too, as far as I can tell.

This is the classic country music story. All the key elements are represented: (1) drinkin', (2) jailin', (3) lovin', (4) leavin'. It's rap for bump-

kins. And an old story, too, from Faron Young to Patsy Cline. Jean Shepard to Johnny Cash. But in country music what goes around comes around, because the clichés it so shamelessly exploits are perennial (which makes it exactly like

pop). The strong resurgence of country during the '80s came about because a new breed of young stars like Dwight Yokam, k.d. lang, Steve Earle and Randy Travis eschewed the muzak glitter of gentrified acts like Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers, opting instead for the whittled-down pathos of the Real Thing: gee-tars, fiddle, pedal steel, harmonica and a toe-tappin' beat.

Dwight Yokam is the most talented of the newcomers, but he doesn't come within a country mile of encompassing the truly phenomenal scope of Randy Travis' audience. *Everyone* between the ages of 10 and

110 likes Travis. If only demographically, Travis is the undisputed King of Country. He's also a punk.

I mean that in the best possible sense. Travis is as much a punk as Johnny Rotten, Iggy Pop or Jello Biafra. Travis is as punk as the Ramones. You see, I'm one of those young hipsters who once considered all country music whiskey-soaked maudlin bullshit and all country fans a mob of inbred closet Klansmen. But after hearing Travis' new album, I realize that country's about people in *pain*, just like punk. So move over, Jim Bakker (he's doin' time, so he'll be legit in country circles when he gets out), *I have seen the light*.

Travis' fourth album, *No Holdin' Back*, is a fine showcase for the greatest million-dollar voice in the business. And what a voice it is. Smooth as Jack Daniels' sippin' whiskey, it could melt the entire contents of a Good Humor truck. From the outside. The highlight is "Somewhere in My Broken Heart," which

could pass for a Lennon McCartney ballad. "I hope that in time You will find what you long for," Travis croons. "Love that's written in the stars And when you finally do, I think you will see It's somewhere in my broken heart."

Yup, our boy's got girl trouble on this LP. (Where would country be without it?) Nine out of the 10 tracks involve the one that got away (or, even worse, the one that hasn't yet), chock-full of the timeless cryin'-in-your-beer sentiments that have kept country in boots for years. Some of the funniest: "I should get a gold watch for all the years I gave I should get some interest for all the dues I paid I don't know why I love you, it's just a job I do I'm your registered, certified, card-carryin' fool." Or: "I feel like a stone you have picked up and thrown. To the hard rock bottom of your heart." As cheesy as these metaphors get sometimes, they can also be surpris-

Our boy Randy's got girl trouble on this LP.

ingly tender, as on "Mining for Coal": "All of the treasures I found in your soul Was like finding a diamond when you're mining for coal." What could be more lovely?

Nothing, which is why Travis is a punk. Here's a kid who had messed himself up badly on booze and drugs by the time he was 13 and has spent a lot of time in the cooler (how many of you sneering, attitude-copping credit-card poseurs can say the same thing?). He found some sort of answer in the music, which he expresses with unabashed honesty; he does what he wants and he does it well and could give a hoot in hell what anyone else thinks. The same thing could have been said about Johnny Rotten, except Travis is just a nice, gentle guy. These days what could be more rebellious? Maybe that explains the popularity of country among young urchins like me fed up with the bush-league fascism of heavy metal on the one hand and the self-satisfied smugness of Letterman yuppies on the other. This kind of earnestness is refreshing. Go ahead, tell her you love her. Cry in your beer. Randy understands. ■

Mark G. Judge is a writer living in Washington, D.C.

East Germany

Continued from page 11

and on December 6 Krenz was officially relieved of all his functions. A special party conference was scheduled for December 8.

As expected, this party conference expelled the old leadership and agreed to do away with the Politburo altogether. With Article One of the constitution—which established the SED's leading role in the country—having been abolished the week before, the party is to be one democratic force among many competing in national elections the government hopes to hold on May 6.

Leading the SED into this new battle will be Gregor Gysi, 41, a lawyer and chairman of the party. The position of general secretary—a post closely associated with Stalinism—has been abolished. Gysi, a devoted Communist yet critical of the old regime for many years, has never held a party post and thus cannot be held accountable for the mistakes of the past. He is also viewed positively by much of the opposition, having defended dissidents in court prior to Honecker's fall. Speaking to reporters after his election, Gysi said he hoped to find "a third socialist path characterized by radical democracy, social equality, environmentalism and equality between men and women." In other words, Gysi appears eager to get back to socialist basics, rejecting the Leninist concept of an elite vanguard and returning to the idea of a mass movement, free of bureaucracy.

For the first time in GDR history, the election of an SED party boss is not identical with a change in government leadership. Many people believe the SED would be lucky

to get 20 percent in the coming election and would have to settle for being a minority partner. Others go so far as to predict that the Communists won't have the electoral strength to govern at all. Such prognoses are not good news to the opposition.

The three major reform groups, Neues Forum, Demokratischer Aufbruch and Demokratie Jetzt, all lack government experience and from the outset resisted being considered political parties. Events of the past week have moved too fast for their liking and have created a power vacuum that has further destabilized the population. With the Modrow government seen as merely an interim solution, the former coalition parties—the Liberal Democratic Party, the Christian Democratic Union and the Peasant Party—tainted by their former submission to the SED and the opposition still in its infancy, citizens have lost faith in any improvement of their lot in the near future. The number of refugees has risen again, and reunification slogans were spotted among the crowds during public demonstrations prior to last week's party conference.

Whether Gysi and the new SED can stem the population's growing pessimism is an open question. Despite all of its apparent dangers, the current situation in the GDR also harbors hope—the chance to start over and build a new society. While improvements in the standard of living are the Modrow government's first priority, the SED could redefine its role by providing the GDR with a new vision—the much-sought-after socialism with a human face.

Gordon Lewis is a freelance journalist based in West Berlin.

Bush

Continued from page 24

face not decline but enormous opportunity.

With the breakup of the Soviet bloc, and even the Soviet Union itself, all the old national and ethnic and political rivalries in that part of the world are being revived. Hungarians vs. Romanians. Serbians vs. Croats. Lithuanians vs. Russians. Then there's the Armenians and those other fellows they're having all the trouble with in that little place out there. We can hardly keep track of them all.

What all of these newly liberated countries are concerned about is their freedom and national security. Now that they're out from under the Soviet yoke, they don't want to be threatened by their former enemies again. Or maybe they have an old score to settle. That means they're going to need the means to defend their freedom for themselves. It also means they'll be looking to us as the world's great defender of freedom.

America has always been ready to meet freedom's call. In recent years, in the Middle East, in Southeast Asia and even here in our own hemisphere, we have been able to serve as freedom's arsenal for virtually all of the contending forces in these regions. Down in Argentina during the Falklands War, over there in that war between Iraq and Iran (I never quite figured out the reason for that one myself, and I used to be head of the CIA), out there in Cambodia with the Chinese and Pol Pot and the Vietnamese all mixed in together in that scrap, down in the Philippines with two different factions of an American-trained and -equipped army shooting each

other up every month or so—you'll see our weapons used and favored by all factions.

In the Middle East, we supply our good friends Israel, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, even though they're enemies of each other. This helps to bring them together in a peace process that promises to stretch well into the next century. Now, we're going to have even more good friends in Transylvania, Moravia, Carpathia, Slovenia, Bessarabia, Ngorno-Kharbakh (I don't think anybody's ever heard of that one before), Estonia, Kosovo, Moldavia, Prussia (that's not Russia, but Prussia; German, I think), Macedonia—I mean the list goes on.

It's America's responsibility to protect the freedom of all of these places, even if it's sometimes hard to pronounce their names. Each one of them will need a country team, an American military-assistance program and all that goes with it.

Now there are those here in America, the isolationists, who'll want us to abandon the freedom-loving peoples of wherever, to leave them alone to face the aggression of their neighbors and fellow citizens. And there are the liberal big spenders, who want us to abandon our defense of freedom and go for all these social programs of the sort that ruined Eastern Europe.

But we're not going to pay them any heed. My answer to them is in the graphic of the flags flying over the apple-pie factory in the heartland that you're now seeing. My answer to them is in the quick cut to the roar of the fans at Madonna concerts and the slow pan of happy faces lined up at the local cineplex to see *Back to the Future Part II*.

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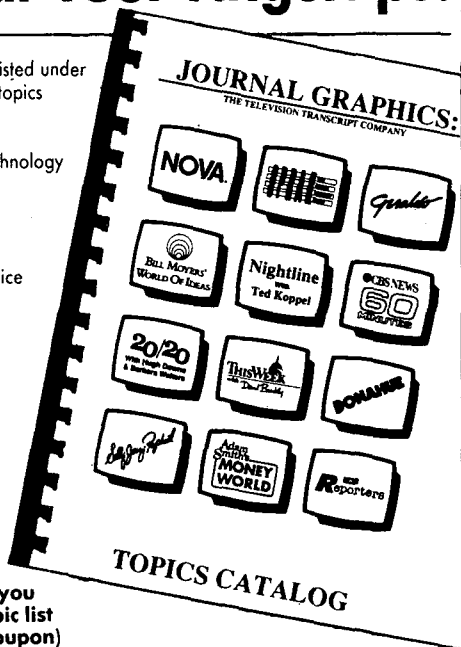
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Redwood Cultural Work presents Pete Seeger, Holly Near, Ronnie Gilbert and Marcel Khalife in an unprecedented benefit concert for the Middle East Children's Alliance on January 12, 1990, at 8 p.m. at the Berkeley Community Theater in Berkeley, Calif. Please call (415) 428-9191 or (415) 548-0542 for more information. Tickets are \$15, \$18.50 and \$22.50.

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The Funding Exchange celebrates a Decade of Funding Social Justice with a weekend of special events. World Film Premiere of *Diego Rivera: I Paint What I See*; Jan. 13, 1990; Lincoln Center. Anniversary Party celebrating "A Decade of Social Justice" with special recognition for Rev. C.T. Vivian and Anne Braden,

organizer Leslie Cagan and donor Chuck Collins, and the students of Howard University and Gallaudet University; Sunday, Jan. 14, 1990; Horn & Hardart Automat. Contact: Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway #500, New York, NY 10012, (212) 529-5300.

January 16-20

The New York State Bar Association's 113th Annual Meeting is scheduled for the week of Jan. 16-20, 1990. More than 5,000 lawyers and judges from throughout the state are expected to attend. The meeting will be highlighted by programs featuring comprehensive review and analysis of issues on the cutting edge of the way law is practiced. For more details, information on speakers, topics, news media registration, etc., or if you have any questions, please contact: Brad Carr, Director of Communications & Public Affairs, New York State Bar Association, One Elk St., Albany, NY 12207, (518) 463-3200.

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Unsources

The video revolution and the revisioning thing

By Pete Karman

The following is a simulated speech by President George Bush on visual theory and the collapse of communism.

HI YA. FIRST, LET ME WISH YOU all a happy holiday. Now, notice the graphic being flashed on your TV screen. That's Karl Marx, the father of the Marxist communism that's been causing so much trouble in the world. See, the picture is being colorized before your very eyes. Marx' beard is going from gray to snow white; his eyes are lighting up and getting jolly instead of serious. You see his cheeks getting rosy and his old-fashioned 19th-century costume being turned into a Santa Claus suit with a real fake-fur collar. Thanks to the magic of our new technology, and thanks to all those freedom-loving people over there in Eastern Europe, we're able this Christmas to turn that nasty old Karl Marx into Kris Kringle. Who would have dreamed in the dark days of the Cold War that such a marvelous thing would be possible?

Right now, of course, you're looking at me sitting at my desk here in the Oval Office. I'm already in full color, and you'll notice the really fine Christmas tree with all those flickering points of light right in back of me. They sent it down from Maine. In these next few shots, you'll see Barb teaching Pedro the houseboy how to read so that he can get his green card. You'll see some of the grandkids—notice how the little brown ones just blend right in with the others. And there's mother Millie chewing on one of my boat shoes. I know that if she could think, she'd be proud that we sent her latest batch of pups over to the National Science Foundation.

As you can see, we're trying something new tonight in the way of presidential addresses. For the first time that I'll be talking to you, you won't be seeing my mug or the usual Oval Office background. Instead, you'll be watching some exciting, moving and even humorous images from here at home and around the world that will make you feel positive in this holiday season about living in the greatest country on Earth. It may be corny, but I couldn't help sticking some family snapshots, mainly vacation scenes, in with this video show.

At the same time, I'll be talking to you on the audio channel of your TV in a less formal way than usual. I'll try to avoid political platitudes and instead give you the straight poop on what's happening over there in Russia and Eastern Europe, and tell you about the effective way America is dealing with these monumental changes.

I call this new way of presenting the president "The Vision Thing."



Although some of my critics claim that I've got no plan, and some even say I haven't a clue, the fact is that we're staying on top of the job here in the White House. We're ahead of the curve. And this is a good way to demonstrate that to you, the American people.

For instance, we've been listening carefully to you, the American people. You've told us in poll after poll, survey after survey, that only a tiny minority of you actually pay attention to what politicians say. (Hey, a lot of the time, I can't say that I blame you.) You don't want to hear a lot of government gibberish about programs and policies. You don't want to know about all these horrors and sob stories overseas. You just want to feel that our country is safe, solid, well-defended and that things are going all right. That's why, for the balance of my time in the White House, we're going to run those positive images of America over my words. In this land of the free, you should have the freedom to listen or watch or do both or neither. It's for that kind of freedom that I was shot down in the Pacific.

Now since only a few of you, mostly in the media and colleges and government, actually need or want to know what we're up to down here in Washington, you'll be able to tune in to my words in what I'm calling "The Briefing Thing."

So let's get right into this new format. On your video, you'll be seeing some very positive images of America, some shots from Malta—we ran into a bit of real weather along with the political clear sailing—and other inspiring graphics. And, I'm happy to report, that on your audio portion, you who choose to listen will be hearing some very encouraging things about what's happening in the crumbling world of communism, as well as some of the challenges rising from this new turn of events. Of course, those of you with the newer MTS sets can substitute your own audio channel to go along with our video. Or you can tune to cable. That's your American right.

Russia? Eastern Europe? So far, so good. Some say we've been a bit too prudent on this one. Let me give you the real story. We saw it coming. I don't want to say we planned for it, because planning is one of those big government statist things that got the Russians in so much trouble. So let's just say we had our ducks in a row.

I know people are worried that the whole defense sector will go down the tubes now that the Soviet threat seems to be melting away. How can we justify big military budgets, they ask, without having a big enemy? They miss the point.

Douglas MacArthur, under whom I served in those dark days of World War II out in the Pacific, once said a wise thing for an Army man: There is no security in this world, only opportunity. Today, our military and our defense industry

Continued on page 22